

# Punch

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# PUNCH

Vol. CCXXXV No. 6151 JULY 9 1958

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LAST year's trouble at Windscale and last week's turbine explosion at Calder Hall are the sort of accidents that could make us uneasy if we weren't constantly getting official assurances that they couldn't happen.

## CHARIVARIA

DEMANDS by London busmen for Sir John Elliot to be given the sack are not expected to meet with much success. The most they can hope for is that he comes out on strike in sympathy with managements everywhere.

### Thought for a Ten-Day Summer

"People have been commenting on the unkindness of June. Yet the rain was almost wholly concentrated in the first 10 days and the last 10 days (over four inches), leaving the middle period approximately to correspond with my long-range forecast. . . ."

*News Chronicle*

PUBLICANS' lives may be simplified by the new shilling-in-the-slot beer machines, says a report, as the landlord will only have to find the glass. And the customer the slot.

NO ONE ever needed a holiday smile more than last week's gale-blown washed-out, tax-ridden, crisis-torn



Britain. This came with the report that the World Bank is borrowing £17,000,000 from the Central Bank of West Germany.

ONE commentator on our annual expenditure of £60,000,000 on drugs

suggests that some way should be found to persuade the public that under the National Health scheme they just can't have everything. The trouble is that in the surgery they seem to think they have.

REPORTS that the Russians at Henley were taking three pints of milk with their meals caused a pang or two at the Milk Marketing Board. It seemed a



perfect opportunity to get the crew to endorse a few advertisements ("We won on British Milk," says Y. Tukulov), but in the end it was felt that it wouldn't be quite the thing.

MR. HEATHCOAT AMORY, after talking of taking his foot off the brake, then denied any early intention of putting his foot on the accelerator. This has caused a feeling of resignation among taxpayers: obviously the Chancellor has nothing left but the dear old clutch.

### Image

"So the packed gallery once more sat in the wings, their noses pressed against the swift-moving scene, applauding the more telling and acid passages of the monologue."

*Tennis report in The Times*

### Two-way Atomic Favourites

If we tell the U.S.A.  
About the process of Nunn-May  
By way of an initial benefaction  
Will America arrange  
To give us in exchange  
The details of the Rosenberg reaction?





## Punch Diary

IN the past, most wealthy patrons of the arts were themselves quite unconnected with art of any kind. Very often, indeed, they seemed to have no particular interest in the causes they bolstered with their millions. With the Independent Television companies it is different: they are already knee-deep, and splashing about pretty recklessly, in several of the arts. Can it be that they are sorry at last for all those quiz-shows, lame plays, corny jokes, cops, robbers, blood, thunder, cowboys, jingles, moaning tots and highly-paid cleavages, that they should suddenly decide to lavish £100,000 a year on the Tate, the Reps, the Drama Schools, Glyndebourne, the Carl Rosa, *et al*?

To many of those who optimistically seek delight and entertainment in the flickering shadows that divide the ads for various detergents, it may seem that a few pounds might have been spared from the hundred thousand, and spent on putting a bit more art into the programmes themselves. But this is a short-sighted view. A strange new vicious circle has been created. The money to patronize the arts comes from the advertisers: but if the programmes show signs of getting arty, the advertisers will shy away from the medium and the money will stop. We can't have it both ways. We must remember that another year of *Highway Patrol* means a nice new picture in the Tate.

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MR. MACMILLAN has been photographed recently smoking a pipe. This is against the rules; the pipe was Mr. Baldwin's trade-mark. It is almost as though some brash upstart performer of fiftyish started to whistle Albert Whelan's signature tune. Lloyd

George's tufty back hair and "Land fit for heroes," Chamberlain's umbrella and love of the ducks in St. James's Park, Churchill's cigar and mispronunciations, Attlee's genius for tart understatement, Eden's hat, and MacDonald's mournful "My friends"—all these have been individual assets as treasured and proprietary as an advertising slogan which has cost much to build. Come, Mr. Macmillan, no gag-pinching, please, or if you must, go a long way back; nobody remembers much about Pam's mannerisms. Even an R.A.D.A. stripling could safely ape Grimaldi.

### No Moustaches by Order

I WAS pleased to see the British Transport Commission, in a letter to *The Times*, coming down sternly against "the salacious in posters" and recording its decision to have no part of such advertising revenue in future. This showed a commendable mixture of altruism and moral rectitude in a concern newly celebrating its latest annual deficit (£27,000,000). I do not envy, however, the task of whatever sub-committee may be appointed to decide whether a poster is salacious or not. Obscenity is a headache to High Court judges, trained in fine decisions. But there is even worse trouble ahead. One class of poster which the Commission undertakes to reject is that which is likely "through . . . possible defacement" to offend the travelling

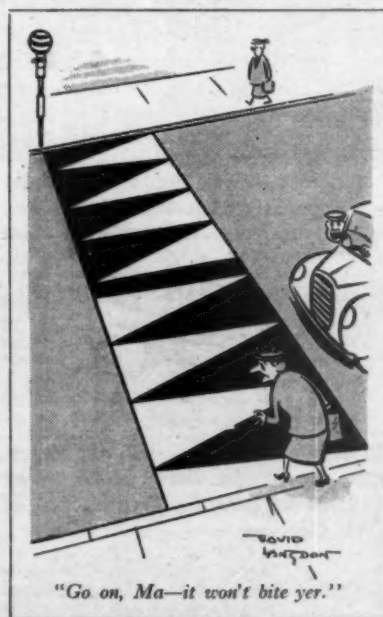
public. It will take a pretty long-sighted sub-committee, on sending-in day, to decide what certain sections of the travelling public are likely to add to the submitted work . . . and whether their ingenuity with a random pencil is, or is not, likely to exceed that of the committee members sitting in wild, speculative judgment.

### Draw it Mild

I FIND myself "weakly associated in a negative sense," to quote from the document, with the report on a survey of cancer in relation to beer drinking in North Wales and Liverpool. At first I feared that my own environmental history and habits might have a significant positive association, if not actually providing a causative agent, but I inhaled more freely on reading that a lot of the mischief may be done among those daily beer drinkers who spend much time in an atmosphere laden with tobacco smoke. Here some open-air enthusiasts, say Housman or Tensing, may have scored a point or two in their time. Ale cans may be safely passed at Ludlow Fair without undue smoke pollution; so may a mug or two of chang (a sweet and, to Western tastes, sickly form of thick beer) in the Western cwm or the icefall, or even among the fleshpots of Namche Bazar and Khatmandu (though this area is admittedly rather outside the scope of the survey). But Chesterton got it all wrong if he thought drinking beer like a Bavarian because he was so very vegetarian was any help; the report firmly insists that any protective effect of green vegetables must be regarded as unproven.

### Rites Wanted

THE TIMES reports that Moscow is running a competition for brightening up civil marriage ceremonies. Most of the entrants want confetti back again. (By some of the accounts of life in Russia, the most they'll get is grey confetti.) We can't really sneer at Russian register offices. How gay are our own? Registrars in England get away with a pretty mechanical routine. Couples who are not married in church are spliced by proceedings that are more like swearing an affidavit in a vestry than receiving the blessings of the State. We ought to be able to choose from the whole range of marriage customs reported by anthropologists.







# WESTERN APPROACHES : Religion

*The first of a series of articles on aspects of modern thought and behaviour*

## REVIVAL OR DECAY?

By C. S. LEWIS

*Professor of Mediæval and Renaissance English, Cambridge*

"BUT would you deny," said the Headmaster, "that there is, here in the West, a great, even growing, interest in religion?"

It is not the sort of question I find easy to answer. *Great and growing* would seem to involve statistics, and I had no statistics. I supposed there was a fairly widespread interest. But I

didn't feel sure the Headmaster was interpreting it correctly. In the days when most people had a religion, what he meant by "an interest in religion" could hardly have existed. For of course religious people—that is, people when they are being religious—are not "interested in religion." Men who have gods worship those gods; it is the

spectators who describe this as "religion." The Maenads thought about Dionysus, not about religion. *Mutatis mutandis* this goes for Christians too. The moment a man seriously accepts a deity his interest in "religion" is at an end. He's got something else to think about. The ease with which we can now get an audience for a discussion of religion does not prove that more people are becoming religious. What it really proves is the existence of a large "floating vote." Every conversion will reduce this potential audience.

Once the climate of opinion allows such a floating vote to form I see no reason why it should speedily diminish. Indecision, often very honest, is very natural. It would be foolish, however, not to realize that it is also no hardship. Floating is a very agreeable operation; a decision either way costs something. Real Christianity and consistent Atheism both make demands on a man. But to admit, on occasion, and as possibilities, all the comforts of the one without its discipline—to enjoy all the liberty of the other without its philosophical and emotional abstinences—well, this may be honest, but there's no good pretending it is uncomfortable.

"And would you, further, deny," said the Headmaster, "that Christianity commands more respect in the most highly educated circles than it has done for centuries? The Intelligentsia are coming over. Look at men like Maritain, like Bergson, like—"

But I didn't feel at all happy about this. Of course the converted Intellectual is a characteristic figure of our times. But this phenomenon would be more hopeful if it had not occurred at a moment when the Intelligentsia (scientists apart) are losing all touch with, and all influence over, nearly the whole human race. Our most esteemed poets and critics are read by our most esteemed critics and poets (who don't usually like them much) and nobody else takes any notice. An increasing



number of highly literate people simply ignore what the "Highbrows" are doing. It says nothing to them. The Highbrows in return ignore or insult them. Conversions from the Intelligentsia are not therefore likely to be very widely influential. They may even raise a horrid suspicion that Christianity itself has become a part of the general "Highbrow racket," has been adopted, like Surrealism and the pictures painted by chimpanzees, as one more method of "shocking the bourgeois." This would be dreadfully uncharitable, no doubt; but then the Intelligentsia have said a great many uncharitable things about the others.

"Then again," boomed the Headmaster, "even where there is, or is as yet, no explicit religion, do we not see a vast rallying to the defence of those standards which, whether recognized or not, make part of our spiritual heritage? The Western—may I not say the Christian—values . . ."

We all winced. And to me in particular there came back the memory of a corrugated iron hut used as an R.A.F. chapel—a few kneeling airmen—and a young chaplain uttering the prayer, "Teach us, O Lord, to love *the things Thou standest for*." He was perfectly sincere, and I willingly believe that the *things* in question included something more and better than "the Western values," whatever those may be. And yet . . . his words seemed to me to imply a point of view incompatible with Christianity or indeed with any serious Theism whatever. God is not, for it, the goal or end. He is (and how fortunate!) enlightened; has, or "stands for," the right ideals. He is valued for that reason. He ranks, admittedly, as a leader. But of course a leader leads to something beyond himself. That something else is the real goal. This is miles away from "Thou has made us for Thyself and our heart has no rest till it comes to Thee." The Maenads were more religious.

"And the substitutes for religion are being discredited," continued the Headmaster. "Science has become more a boggy than a god. The Marxist heaven on earth—"

And only the other day a lady told me that a girl to whom she had mentioned death replied "Oh, but by the time I'm *that* age Science will have done something about it." And then



I remembered how often, in disputing before simple audiences, I had found the assured belief that whatever was wrong with man would in the long run (and not so very long a run either) be put right by "Education." And that led me to think of all the "approaches" to "religion" I actually meet. An anonymous postcard tells me that I ought to be flogged at the cart's tail for professing to believe in the Virgin Birth. A distinguished literary atheist to whom I am introduced mutters, looks away, and walks swiftly to the far end of the room. An unknown American writes to ask me whether Elijah's fiery chariot was really a Flying Saucer. I encounter Theosophists, British

Israelites, Spiritualists, Pantheists. Why do people like the Headmaster always talk about "religion"? Why not religions? We seethe with religions. Christianity, I am pleased to note, is one of them. I get letters from saints, who have no notion they are any such thing, showing in every line radiant faith, joy, humility, and even humour, in appalling suffering. I get others from converts who want to apologize for some small incivility they committed against me in print years ago.

These bits and pieces are all "the West" I really know at first hand. They escape the Headmaster's treatment. He speaks from books and articles. The real sanctities, hatreds, and lunacies



which surround us are hardly represented there. Still less, the great negative factor. It is something more than ignorance as he would understand the word. Most people's thinking lacks a dimension which he takes for granted. Two instances may make the distinction clear. Once, after I had said something on the air about Natural Law, an old Colonel (obviously *anima candida*) wrote to say that this had interested him very much and could I just tell him of "some handy little brochure which dealt with the subject fully." That is ignorance, striking only in degree. Here is the other. A vet, a workman, and I were wearily stumbling about on a Home Guard patrol in the small hours. The vet and I got talking about the causes of wars and arrived at the conclusion that we must expect them to recur. "But—but—but—" gasped the workman. There was a moment's silence, and he broke out, "But then what's the

good of the ruddy world going on?" I got a very clear impression of what was happening. For the first time in his life a really ultimate question was before him. The sort of thing we have been considering all our lives—the meaning of existence—had just broken upon him. It was a wholly new dimension.

Is there a homogeneous "West"? I doubt it. Everything that can go on is going on all round us. Religions buzz about us like bees. A serious sex

worship—quite different from the cheery lechery endemic in our species—is one of them. Traces of embryonic religions occur in Science Fiction. Meanwhile, as always, the Christian way too is followed. But nowadays, when it is not followed, it need not be feigned. That fact covers a good deal of what is called the decay of religion. Apart from that, is the present so very different from other ages or "the West" from anywhere else?

Other contributors in this series will be:

JOHN BERGER  
MONICA FURLONG  
ANTONY HOPKINS  
D. F. KARAKA  
WOLF MANKOWITZ  
HUGH MASSINGHAM

DREW MIDDLETON  
MAURICE RICHARDSON  
GEORGE SCOTT  
JAMES THURBER  
R. C. ROBERTSON-GLASGOW  
JOHN WAIN  
REBECCA WEST

## Beside the Sea

By ALEX ATKINSON

*British and Continental landladies are to exchange views*

THE briefest interrogation of anyone who has spent a holiday in Cartagena within the past few years will satisfy you that far too little is being done there in the way of lukewarm sausage-and-mash, or even framed colour-prints of the Laughing Cavalier in the visitors' lounge. The same thing applies, I'm sorry to say, in Rapallo,

Esbjerg, Chioggia, St. Valéry-en-Caux and Zandvoort—not to mention Ajaccio. Ostend I'm not too sure about.

You may not have thought of it before, but if you have ever had occasion yourself to take digs in San Remo it can hardly have escaped your notice that landladies in that otherwise desirable resort will flagrantly neglect, in the

main, to shove you out of the house as soon as you've finished your bacon and tomato, slam the door in your face, and leave you to roam the streets looking for the pier until lunch time instead of skulking in your bedroom squeezing your drip-dry shirt and writing post-cards to the chaps in your local. As a matter of fact you'll be lucky if you get bacon and tomato, and even if you do you'll have to work up something approaching an incident before they'll give you a bottle of brown sauce.

If I wanted to be really nasty I could mention places not a hundred miles from Nice where a landlady will laugh in your face if you ask her why she doesn't lock up the upright on rainy days so that her guests can sit glumly around the paper fan in the grate playing German whist with forty-three cards to a pack and nothing for tea but brawn. Oh, I could make your blood run positively cold.

There is a gleam of hope, however. There's just the barest chance, I'm glad to say, that all this may be altered. A short while ago the British Federation of Hotel and Boarding House Associations had before it a scheme under which

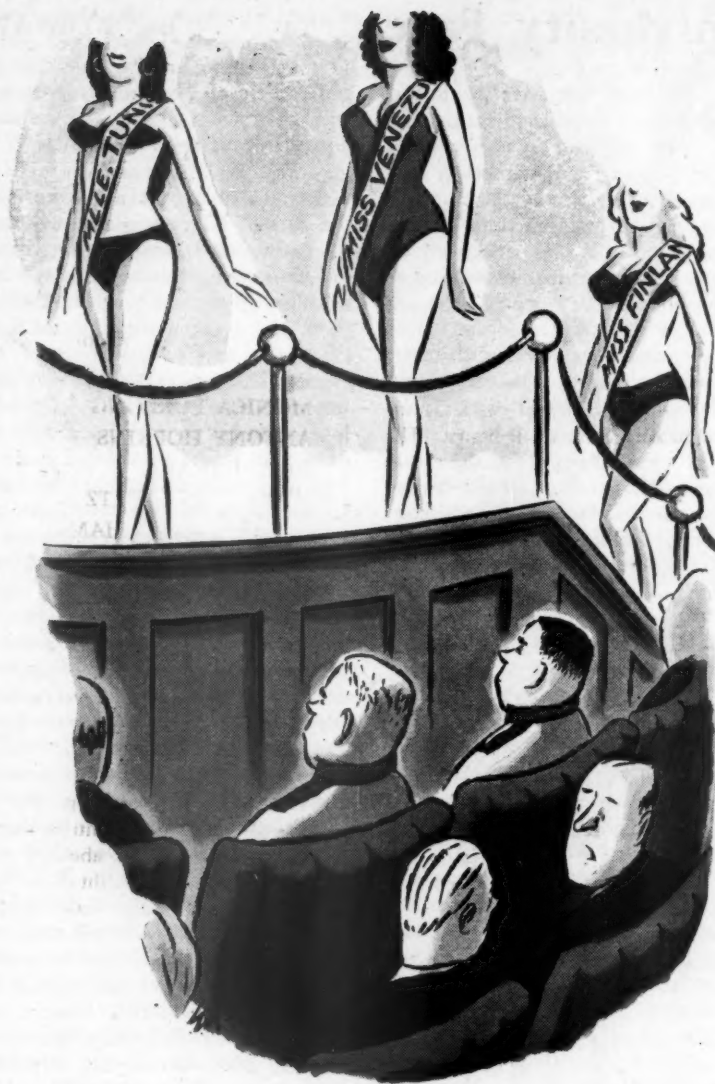


British and Continental seaside landladies would exchange holidays. According to the organizer of the scheme (the Secretary of a non-profit-making travel club) this would "provide British landladies with ideas for brightening up their boarding houses, and help those on the Continent to learn from the British holiday industry," and I must say the idea seems to me to bear the seeds of the greatest step forward since the invention of sandals with holes at the front for letting the wet sand ooze out and stopping your toes from getting all clogged up.

Not, mark you, that I view with anything but the most solemn apprehension the possibility of the streets of Frinton being jammed with mobs of masked revellers guzzling red wine out of goat-skins until all hours, clicking their castanets and harmonizing "Come Back to Sorrento." Nor, for that matter, would I personally relish the idea of having my morning tea brought up, in Morecambe, by some voluptuous dark-eyed slip of a girl with a geranium sticking out of her mouth and no shoes and stockings on, who might pelt me with grapes and upset all my arrangements. I suppose room might be made for a bull-ring in Scarborough at a pinch, and the addition of fried octopus to the menu could be the making of many a Clacton boarding house. Similarly, I have nothing against the establishment of a colony of fiddle-playing gipsies in caves around Polperro, so long as it was clearly understood from the outset that they rendered their flamencos in English, lit no fires, and picked up all litter in the morning.

But it is not this aspect of the scheme which chiefly attracts me. What I hope for is to see some of these Continental people brightening up their ideas a bit.

Not to put too fine a point on it, I want more musty copies of *The Way of an Eagle* on the shelves of all those lodgings in Trouville, to say nothing of *Quo Vadis?* and the *1919 Merry Book for Young Ladies*. I want a Hall of Authentic Human Freaks ("You'll Gasp!") on the front at Biarritz, and rather more candy-floss stalls in Christiansand. As far as Monte Carlo is concerned, how can we be expected to flock there in our thousands while the chances of obtaining fish-and-chips to take out in the Casino (with salt and vinegar) remain so pathetically slender?



"It's sinister. This year they send a couple of observers—next year, from some secret training camp beyond the Urals . . ."

What, may I ask, are the mayor and corporation of Venice doing about dodgems? Where can you buy a really nice *Chase Me Charlie* hat in Malaga—one that won't go all soggy in the first shower of rain? Chianti on the sands is all very well, I suppose, if you're bent on making a spectacle of yourself, but are there any waxworks in Brindisi in case the sun goes in? Can you have your photo taken with your head sticking through a hole in Ciudadela? What is the flavour of Helsingfors rock? Do they have only *one* flavour? How many times a week do they have a change of

programme at the Odeon in Cannes? Who is on show in a barrel in Rimini? How much does a Mystery Coach Tour cost on an average in Scheveningen, including a tip for the driver? Can kiddies leave small crabs in buckets in the hall in Villafranca without landladies coming pounding upstairs and banging on your door?

These are just a few of the questions I'll want answered if ever this scheme gets under way, and even then I'll want to see some real action taken before I cancel *my* standing order at St. Annes-on-Sea.

# University Faces

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

ONE does not have to be an avowed feminist to realize that nine-tenths of the male population of Oxford and Cambridge are wasting their time, wasting the country's money, and cornering accommodation that could be used more effectively by women. In a recent inquiry four out of ten male graduates gave "pleasing daddy" as their reason for attending the university; three admitted that they were wife-hunting; two said they were merely amusing themselves, and one confessed that he was "after a cricket blue."

This inquiry, conducted with private funds among graduates of my acquaintance, may be of interest to parents with daughters, university grants committees,

and readers of *The Times* correspondence columns. I open the casebook virtually at random . . .

Peter L. (now a welfare officer with the Barking Creosote Company) said: "I knew that I should marry within two years of graduation, so I didn't take the thing very seriously. I mean, what's the use of a degree to a married man? Once the knot's tied most of the glamour disappears; my wife very soon stopped addressing me as B.A., and the letters cut absolutely no ice with the darts club, Inland Revenue or Harrods. I got my present job because I once took seven wickets for thirty-two against a Barking side captained by a director of the Creosote Co."

Simon P.S. (unemployed) said: "I was happy at Wisbech Grammar School, very happy. I wanted to take 'O' Level and then get a job as apprentice clerk in the Transport and General Workers' Union. But my mum said no, and insisted on the varsity. I did it to please her, and I've never regretted it. Honestly, I had a smashing time at Cambridge, and I don't think my degree was much of a handicap when later on I applied for a job with the T.G.W.U. By that time, though, a clerk's pay wasn't enough to cover the expensive tastes I'd acquired. I've been on relief ever since, my mum collecting it for me whenever possible."

Thomas R. T. (a London bus driver) said: "Yes, I've often wondered whether my Ph.D. was worth while. When I finally came down I set up in practice in Dean Street as a doctor of philosophy, but while I was on holiday at Broadstairs my locum decamped with my diploma and books and put me out of business. Still, I'd never have met Stell but for Professor Tomkin's lectures on Kant, so I'm well satisfied really with my university career. I supported Cousins in the bus strike. He's great."

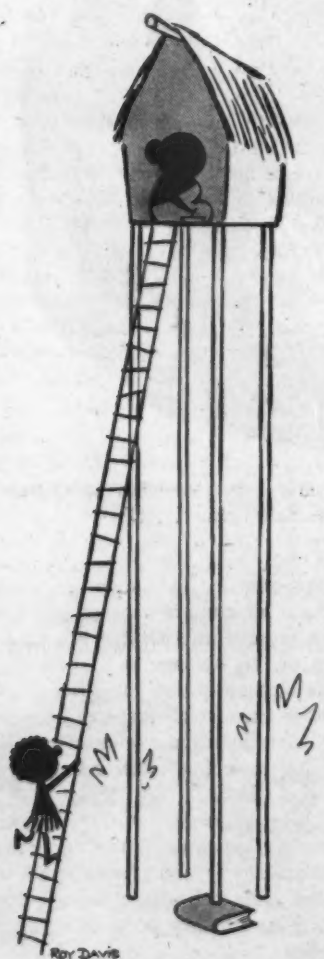
Humbert W. (the famous cricketer) said: "I owe everything to Cambridge. I got a ton in the Freshman's Match of 1941, played for the university for three years, went to India on tour, did the odd broadcast, sponsored 'Clenecut' electric shavers and Evans' dubbin, and finally was invited to become assistant

secretary of the county cricket club. The work isn't too difficult, but I do think they ought to have compulsory elementary arithmetic in the arts degree courses. I went back to Cambridge a few weeks ago for a reunion dinner, and I was amazed to find so many of the undergraduates still wearing the old silk-poplin style shirt: 'Krekoyl' drip-dry wears like steel, looks whiter than virgin snow, and looks o-so-rite Mondays thro' Fridays."

Sir William T. (Managing Director of Uskub Products, director of the Western Bank, Phillpot Laminated Glue, the South London Estates Co., etc.) said: "Reading Univ. is my Alma Mater. I was sent down in '05 after a stink about union funds, but in '53 they gave me an honorary doctorate, so all ends well. I think every boy who hopes to get into business would benefit from a spell as treasurer of the union, the field club or something."

Owen S. M. (retired) said: "My main interests are the garden, and collecting toffee papers, and I'm pretty useful too at the stove. And my chief grouse against the London School of Economics is that they taught me nothing there about any of these things. A more serious criticism perhaps is that they taught a sort of Malthusian pessimism when my whole aim and object in life was to have lots and lots of babies. An inferiority complex was the result. At twenty-seven I am finding life very difficult, one thing and another. My wife is out all day teaching and five nippers take a lot of handling."

"Odd you should ask," said Lewis O. (head buyer at Scanfields), "because honestly, old boy, I've often wondered myself. The old man was dead set on education and all that sort of hogwash and put my name down for Grenoble, Geneva or somewhere. Well, fortunately the old war came along and the Continong not looking so rosy I buzzed off to Cambridge instead. Well, King's is one helluva finishing school—I was sent down after two terms. Funny thing is my sis, Hilda, always a swotty one, wanted to go to Girton, but the old man said nix because of all the sitting and resultant spreading. She's a sour old spinster of thirty-nine now and reads nothing but the *Mirror*, and





as you see I'm doing very nicely thank you even without the tie. Same again?"

Osbert K. (retired) said: "My mum read somewhere that Presidents of the Union at Oxford always rise to positions of eminence in public life, so when I was just a lad she applied for a presidency, and getting no answer sulked. Dad was always away on trawlers, and to keep in touch I got my scholarship transferred to Aberdeen University where I did all but distinguish myself. After graduation (in genetics) I took a job with Montcrieff Bakery, being

promoted after fifteen years to their distilling subsidiary as regional manager. It was 1943 when I was made president of the Oxford Branch and my mum wasn't there, unfortunately, to see it."

Whether these documents prove anything or not it is hardly my place to say. With two daughters, both approaching university entrance age, it is not for me to suggest that female accommodation on our great seats of learning is unspeakably poor. You are invited, however, to draw your own conclusions.

## Notes for an Architect

By H. F. ELLIS

**N**UMBER Ten Downing Street is more than an address. I state this obvious fact because it took me so long to realize it. For years it was just a frequently photographed front door, at which Prime Ministers said good-bye to callers and before which small crowds gathered from time to time. Occasionally a butler was seen accepting a protest, and this suggested some sort of life behind the façade; but the impression was fleeting. There was also of course a Cabinet Room somewhere about. Was it not there that Gladstone said a last farewell to his ministers, and everyone wept but he? And was there not, too, some scandal about Disraeli refusing to give up the Chancellor's robe when he left the Exchequer? Only that, come to think of it, was at Number Eleven.

The place declined to come alive as a house. Then, round about 1943, while performing some sort of useless function on Horse Guards Parade, I saw Mr. Churchill descend from a black saloon and nip through a garden-door in the wall of what must clearly be the garden of Number Ten. This gave the place a roundness, a solidity. I began to visualize a back to the house, with perhaps a conservatory and a great many square downpipes collecting above a water-butt, as in old rectories. It came to me that there must be bedrooms, but those I did not visualize, being in too much awe of the Prime Minister to take such a liberty. This was before the time, it has to be remembered, when it was scarcely possible to take up a book of any kind without coming upon a

description of Mr. Churchill in bed, and I would sooner have thought of the Archbishop of Canterbury in his bath than mentally prop the Premier up against a pillow. The house was still, in some degree, a shell.

It was Mr. Churchill again, with his genius for enlivening detail, who gave me my first vivid glimpse of the interior. "The kitchen at No. 10 Downing Street," he writes in the second volume of his war memoirs, "is lofty and spacious, and looks out through a large plate-glass window about twenty-five feet high." There is nothing like a kitchen for bringing a house to life. It is the true hearth, the focal point, the source of food and warmth for all the household; and I do not give a fig for any novelist or historian who thinks he is describing an age, an epoch, a family, and never puts his nose inside this vital shrine. The moment I came upon this mention of a kitchen at Number Ten the place began to hum with life. There was a stir and bustle. Hot water bubbled in the pipes. Plates and dishes were borne to and fro, and from beyond the green-baize door came the sharp, incisive tones of statesmen, the low murmur of secretaries. It was not difficult, standing in imagination before that twenty-five-foot window, to catch cook's excitement on hearing that there would be twelve ambassadors extra for dinner.

The feeling of familiarity with Number Ten was brief. On the very next page of Sir Winston's memoirs the bomb, it will be remembered, fell. The kitchen "with all its bright saucepans



and crockery" became a heap of rubble. The staff, because of the Prime Minister's prevision, were safe, but the great window was no more. The house reverted in an instant, as far as I was concerned, to its old shell-like state, and so (since no subsequent incumbent has troubled to tell me when or in what fashion the kitchen was reconstituted) it has remained.

Perhaps for this reason I cannot feel greatly exercised over the decision to remodel the interior. Indeed I should have thought they might just as well, while they are about it, remodel the exterior as well, and perhaps move the whole thing to a more suitable location. There is a golden opportunity here to build a Prime Minister's residence that will fulfil the functions of a Prime Minister's residence. Is it to be cast away because of some sentimental feeling for a façade erected by a "profiteering contractor" (the phrase is Sir Winston Churchill's) two hundred and fifty years ago?

Here, in case the responsible architect would care to jot them down, are the primary requirements for a Prime Minister's London residence designed to last for, say, another two hundred and fifty years:

It must have room for more people to demonstrate in front of it in comfort.

It should stand in a street with proper openings at each end, so that the police

can keep demonstrators moving along at an even pace, without being accused of setting dogs on them.

It should have a kind of sunk fore-court for news cameramen, so that members of the public can see over their heads when Prime Ministers are driving off to Buckingham Palace.

It must have at least one side-door, to lend an air of secrecy to the comings and goings of ministers when Governments are being formed. Preferably two or three. "Mr Selwyn Lloyd leaving by the little-used west side-entrance" is a caption with delicate

undertones. "Postern" would be even better.

It ought surely to have a waiting-room, so that protest-lodgers can wait their turn in comfort.

It must have an air of solid middle-class cosiness inside, so that Commonwealth Premiers dining together on TV can be seen to resemble just an ordinary happy family with no frills.

At the same time it ought to be magnificent enough to allow Socialist Prime Ministers to curry favour with their supporters by refusing to live in it.

It must have a private room for

Prime Ministers to be willing to meet trade union leaders in at any time of the day or night; also a number of smaller rooms for Personal Private Secretaries to write up their future memoirs in.

It must have a kitchen bright with saucepans, so that I can believe in it as a house and not a mere façade. And finally, the façade itself must at all costs be so ugly, unsuitable and ill-constructed that when the time comes to pull it down even lovers of Elizabethan ferro-concrete exteriors will content themselves with a couple of letters to *The Times*.

## Dutch Treat

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

*Next Saturday a Punch XI will be foolhardy enough to play cricket against the Over-Forties of the Hague*

ANYONE who thinks that Dutch cricket is some mild variation of French cricket should think again.\* Our forthcoming fixture will inaugurate the 80th Anniversary Festivities of The Hague Cricket Club—a point not made clear to us when the

\*This applies particularly to members of the *Punch XI*.

first editorial circular came round asking how many of us could borrow the necessary boots—and promises to be a heavy international responsibility. If the Dutch think, as the English do, that England is the home of cricket, then any team coming out of England is likely to be regarded as an England team. This would be a foolish mistake, and we did our best to suggest as much

to a young Dutch journalist who was sent over by *Het Vaderland* recently to spy out our form.

Four of us, or it may have been five—at any rate we represented the sum of the selectors' work to date—granted him an interview in a pub off Fleet Street. It would have given a quite undesirable impression to have met him instead in the Long Room of the *Punch* pavilion on the *Punch* ground, even if the Room, the pavilion or the ground had existed. He seemed surprised, all the same, to find us drinking beer in thick smoke, though we explained that this was our usual form of training, which had served us well in the three matches we had already played since 1947. But he was a simple fellow (he had just told the barman to keep the change out of ten shillings for a packet of twenty), and accepted the information gravely.

We recalled past triumphs, among them the occasion when we fielded thirteen men and our opponents pretended not to notice (12th wicket stand of 3 runs); we told him how our wicket-keeper tended to hand round snuff between overs, many a sitter being dropped in a sneeze; how in our last game (lunch having been taken before start of play), the opening pair halted half-way to the wicket and exchanged the following dialogue:

"What are we doing here in these clothes?"

"We must be mad."

We explained that most of us had not played since school, some not then.



"Speaking from memory I'd say you've made her curves go in where they ought to come out—and her tail is a bit too long."



"Funny how you can always tell the studio staff from the admin. staff."

That we batted in glasses and fielded in positions unrecognized by the M.C.C. ("Over there on the boundary near the small roller"). That our equipment was scanty, though one member was rumoured to own a personal batting glove, old style, with separate thumb on a yard of tape. In conclusion we confirmed that we had contracted to play the Over-Forties of The Hague, and would respect our obligations for England's sake, but would prefer to make it the Over-Eighties, if an adjustment could be arranged in the time.

The accredited representative of *Het Vaderland*, who had made notes at first but had long put away his pencil, was now looking graver than ever. "But in that case," he said, "why do you come to play?" We told him "For fun," and he thanked us and said that he would have to be going.

For some time afterwards we were very pleased with ourselves over this interview. After reading it, it would

become clear to the Over-Forties of The Hague that if they wanted the inaugural ceremony to spin out until lunch-time they would do well to stick to their mildest bowlers and wildest bats. It only occurred to us later that they would think we had been joking, and that we might have done a good deal better for ourselves by telling stirring falsehoods of whirlwind centuries and hat-tricks by the bagful. But by that time the damage was done. We have now received details of the team we are to meet. It looks extremely formidable. From the very look of the names we can see the sort of stuff likely to be sent down by this M. H. van Hoogstraten; square-leg is going to run himself to tatters after the cannon-ball hooks of W. G. K. Arendsen de Wolff; Jonkheer P. van Riemsdijk will be a tiger in the slips.

It seems to us that we have three main hopes. First our traditional sense of humour—though there are vague misgivings here. The timely joke on

the field of play has served us well at home. Fieldsmen cannot but warm to the man, who, simultaneously stepping on his wicket and poking a simple catch to silly mid-on, carries the thing off with a quip. But how many quips do we know in Dutch? We read in the current issue of a Dutch magazine called, rather surprisingly, *Cricket*, "Het Punch-team nog nooit buiten het Verenigd Koninkrijk is opgetreden," and naturally we hope so. But it's hard to be sure.

Secondly, we might persuade half a dozen Hants and/or Surrey men to abandon their own struggle for half a day and take a hand in ours.

But our best chance, for *Punch* and for England, is one of those mishaps with a dyke. Provided no interfering little Dutch boy sticks his finger in, our score-book may still carry the honourable note, "Match drawn. Sea stopped play."

(A report on the match will appear in a fortnight's time, supposing a member of the touring side survives to write it.)





"First stop The Mitre!"



"Cooney's Cassocks stand the test,  
Choosy Churchmen say they're best.  
Sure-fire sermons, never flops;  
Cooney's Cassocks are the tops."



Sprod

"Hold this—we're just going to hammer out some doctrinal differences."

GAS AND GAITERS

# Toby Competitions

## No. 24—In a Nutshell

**R**EMEMBERING Wilde's famous fox-hunting epigram, but not necessarily imitating its form, competitors are invited to compose pithy definitions of any two of the following:—Wimbledon Tennis; Chess; the Boat Race; Goodwood; Amateur Dramatics; Professional Golf; Trout-fishing; Bridge.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive Toby bookmarks. Entries (any number, but each on a separate piece of paper and accompanied by a separate entry token, cut out from the bottom right-hand corner of this page) by first post on Friday, July 18, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 24, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

## Report on Competition No. 21 (Selected Verse)

Six well-known lines of English verse or poetry were asked for here, each to be taken from a different source, and the whole allowed to form a comment upon some topic of the day. The entry was large, and most rewarding: competitors showed such ingenuity and wit that the task of selecting an outright winner was extremely difficult. Topics ranged from the recent bus strike (easily the most popular) to the situation in Cyprus. The line most frequently encountered was Kipling's "An' there ain't no buses runnin' from the Bank to Mandalay."

The prize has been awarded to:

ANDREW LEGGATT  
40 PORTLAND PLACE  
LONDON, W.1

for the following entry:

### P. B. H. May is caught by Alabaster in the Second Test Match

I heard a Voice within the Tavern cry,  
"Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible  
And smooth as monumental alabaster?  
See my lips tremble, and my eye-balls roll.  
Pass me the can, lad; there's an end of  
May:  
Glory and loveliness have pass'd away."

Among the many entries which ran the above very close were the following:

### A Fashion Model

A Mistress moderately fair,  
And sable curls all silver'd o'er with white;  
Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem:  
Her life was turning, turning.  
*Miss Jean Steffee, H.Q. 8th. Inf. Division,  
SJA Sec., A.P.O. 111 (22b) Bad Kreuznach, Germany*

### A Lament

that certain Test Match commentators are given to describing the landscape or the heavens, rather than the game  
With thee conversing I forget all time,  
Who loses, and who wins; who's in, who's out:

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

Oh, rather give me commentators plain;  
The creature's at his dirty work again!  
*Rev. M. H. St. J. Maddocks, Precinct House, St. Andrew's Vicarage, Uxbridge, Middlesex*

### Fall-out

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
The awful shadow of some unseen Power,  
The brood of Folly without father bred.  
Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour.

*P.O. P. D. Greene, Officers' Mess, Royal Air Force, St. Mawgan, Newquay, Cornwall*

### Television Glamour

Standing aloft in giant ignorance,  
Her supple breast thrills out  
In a thousand lusty shapes,  
So slowly moved about.  
Though art's hid causes are not found,  
Let fall the curtain, wheel the sofa round.  
*C. F. Rathbone, 71 Fairway, Aldwick Bay, Bognor Regis*

### Lines on not being able to keep up the payments on the television

Farewell! thou art too dear for my  
possessing,  
Spirit of a winter's night;  
I did but look and love awhile  
And I was filled with such delight:  
The smiles that win, the tints that glow;  
But now I have no money, O!  
*M. E. Howes, Upper Venning, Much Marcle, Ledbury, Herefordshire*

### To Whom It May Concern

I will show you fear in a handful of dust,  
Atoms or systems into ruin hurled.  
Some unsuspected isle in far-off seas  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.  
Who then to frail mortality shall trust,  
And stand secure amidst a falling world?  
*Mrs. H. D. Williams, 22 Chesterford Gdns., London, N.W.3*

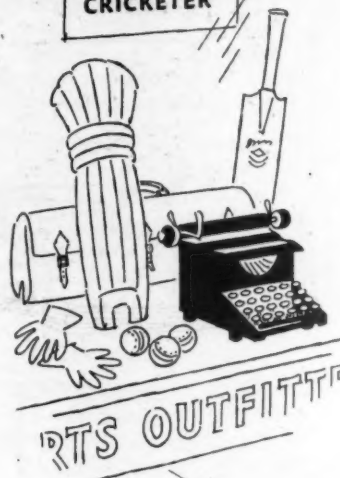
### On Seeing the First Bus again on London Bridge

There go the ships, and there is that  
Leviathan,  
Of vast proportions and painted red.  
What, and is it really you again?  
So smooth, so sweet, so silv'ry is thy voice.  
And we, the passengers,  
We in ourselves rejoice!  
*D. A. H. Byatt, Yaffles, 44 Salmons Lane, Whyteleaf, Surrey*

### Trying to get a Taxi after the Trooping the Colour

The glories of our blood and state?  
Weeping, weeping multitudes,  
They stood and prayed each one to be first  
taken;  
Then someone said "We will return no  
more.  
How vainly men themselves amaze  
For all our pomp and pageantry and power!"  
*Katharine Dowling, 22 Markham Street, London, S.W.3*

EVERYTHING  
FOR THE  
CRICKETER



### The Bus Strike

The ploughman homeward plods his  
weary way,  
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!  
Home by different ways. Yet all  
Fled is that music: Do I wake or sleep?  
*M. E. Maxwell, Woburn Cottage, 35 North Road, Preston Village, Brighton*

### The Oval

Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot  
Hope springs eternal in the human breast.  
May will be fine next year, as like as not.  
That I have uttered; bring me to the Test.  
A bitter God to follow, a beautiful God to  
behold—  
Mine be a handful of Ashes, a mouthful of  
mould.  
*Dr. R. M. Macphail, Saxilby, Lincoln*

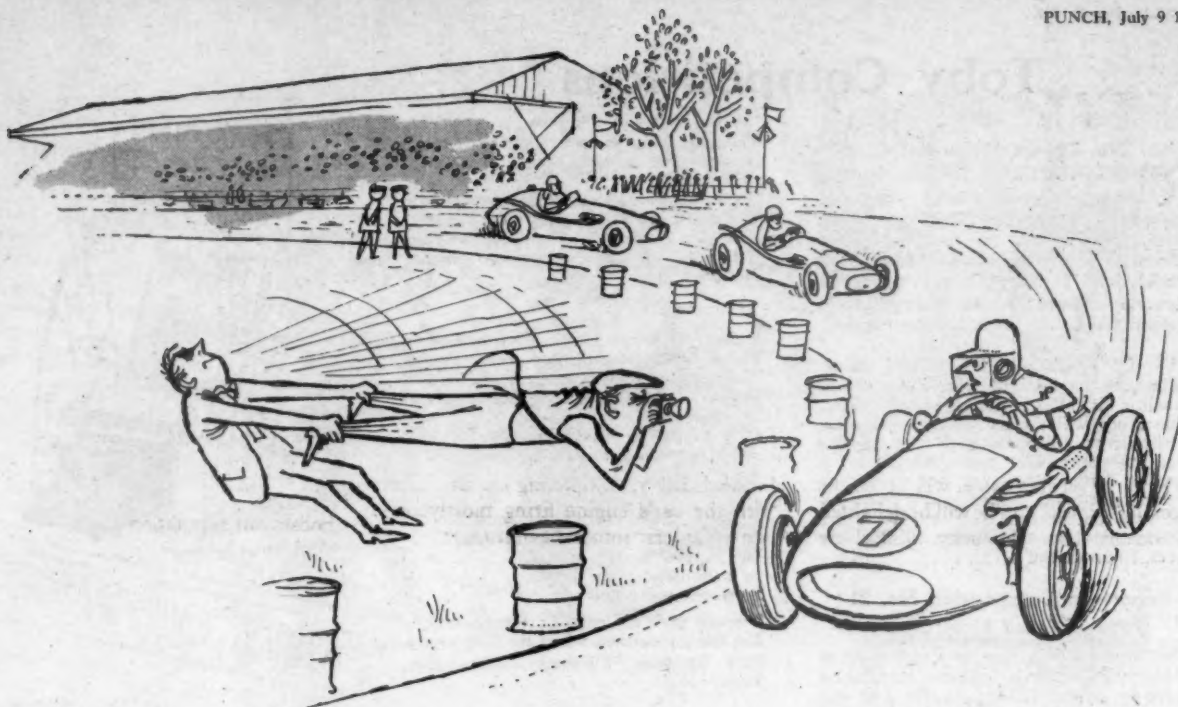
### A Falling Empire

Now fades the glimmering landscape on  
the sight,  
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;  
The brazen throat of war has ceased to  
roar,  
In which the sword was servant unto right.  
What if my leaves are falling like its own,  
And we are left, or shall be left, alone?  
*F. H. Townshend-Rose, 111 Thornbury Road, Osterley, Middlesex*

### Office Hours in the Bus Strike

Stands the church clock at ten to three?  
Old Kaspar's work was done.  
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all  
three,  
—I wish I thought *What Jolly Fun!*—  
In vacant or in pensive mood  
To Primrose Hill and St. John's Wood.  
*John Orpen, 19 Buckingham Place, Brighton*

Toby bookmarks to all those quoted.



## Racetrack Recollections

By S. C. H. DAVIS

**W**ATCHING stern-faced men in brightly-coloured guided missiles hurtle into curves at Silverstone, Reims, Indianapolis, or suchlike, you might not believe that the whole thing began because man's enthusiasm makes him into such a phenomenal liar. But it did.

The whole array of official time-keepers and so on was laid on so that times accomplished over given distances could be proved beyond doubt.

The untruths persist: I think of team-chief Lionel Martin's famous repartee to a claim of fantastic mileage in the hour. Said he: "Magnificent, so magnificent that you wouldn't believe it if you hadn't been there." And, after dubious agreement from the party of the second part, "Well, permit me the same privilege."

Popular idea, if we consider the evidence provided, is that only men of special gifts and Herculean physique would take the fantastic risks best expressed as "Dicing with Death." It doesn't seem to work out that way. A thin-faced, weak looking, wildly temperamental individual with a bright red V-twin beard, Jenatzy by name, was one of our finest drivers: another one was phlegmatic, over-fat Théry; and

another was little brown, sad-looking Nuvolari. Compare Segrave with Fangio, Ascari with Farina, Caracciola (whose ancestor Nelson hanged) with Vukovitch, and you will see there is no dominant type.

Sometimes their humour is a mite odd. During practice for one race a friend was long overdue. Occurred that someone ought to go see what had happened. Someone did; returned twenty minutes later with the delightful news that "Old So-and-so had entered into a cow and there rested."

Autocratic team chief I knew once tore a strip off a driver who had broken the car's gear lever off short by what he called "plurry ham-handedness." You do not argue with team chiefs. But next race the car was going well with that same driver when, to the horror of all concerned, he brought it smartly to the "pit," threw a broken gear lever on to the pit counter, kissed his hand to the chief, and departed at speed. The chief was near to apoplexy. He was even nearer when they discovered that the car was continuing at unabated speed—a mechanical impossibility ultimately solved when it was discovered still to possess a gear lever. One thrown out had been carefully

acquired from the scrap-heap beforehand.

It doesn't matter what type of Grand Prix you run in, the essential, basic humour prevails. As I live by bread I swear that in days gone by I saw a riding mechanic soundly beating his driver almost in front of the stands. True, the driver had succeeded in overturning the car as a result of a phenomenal avoidance, but even so it seemed odd.

All the time you are either up or down: down, when very expensive noises put an end to hope all too early, and you watch friends "motoring" on while you edit and re-edit your coming interview with the team chief or managing director; up, when unexpected and miraculous things happen. Four cars crashed together a while ago, three from one notoriously unpopular team. Yet, by sheer miracle, the only car which could be made to go on won.

There are of course grim moments. Once a famous driver led magnificently for three quarters of a great international race. Then, slight error, a crash, and he was killed. His chief withdrew the remaining two cars. But to emphasize that he had no need to, he had the engine of each machine revved to its



limit before it was wheeled away. And the winner from another country's team drove round on his lap of honour to place his victor's garland on the wreck of his rival's car.

All of which leads to what you might call superstition, and we don't. Hell broke loose once because a famous driver found his dirty little woolly "mascot" missing just before the start. Gallic exuberance caused a friend of mine always to paste the photo of his latest girl-friend on the centre boss of the steering wheel—covered with tissue paper until he started, because he had over many girl-friends.

Hope a German driver will "break his neck and bones" and he will be delighted; he deems this wish lucky. Similarly, Italians wish to be "eaten by a wolf."

Drivers tend rather to regard spectators as a species of wingless vulture. Another friend of mine turned his car over during practice for one race. Flung clear, he rolled to the feet of a bunch of excited spectators just in time to hear one say to another "eeeh man, but this is grand." They had difficulty in keeping him from committing homicide.

And there are moments when officials are not as popular as their undoubted efficiency would warrant. The race rules forbid the use of spare parts not carried in the car during a very long race. A driver being in dire trouble for want of a magneto, his pit personnel decided to supply him by sending a mechanic by stealth across country to tie a new magneto to the branch of a tree bordering the race circuit. Everything went according to plan—except that a large, fiercely-moustached, French official chose to smoke under that same tree. And you can imagine how he endeared himself to the infuriated driver, completing lap after lap with the car's engine firing mostly on two cylinders, sometimes on three.

Ah well, it is a great game, very satisfying as you sit at a roadside café after practice exchanging vivid, and improbable, lies with the drivers of other nations. And that magnificent feeling when the car's engine is pulling at full revs, you are going faster than ever before, with the roar of exhaust behind and the howl of wind in the ears, is a thrill beyond compare.

## Improving the Breed

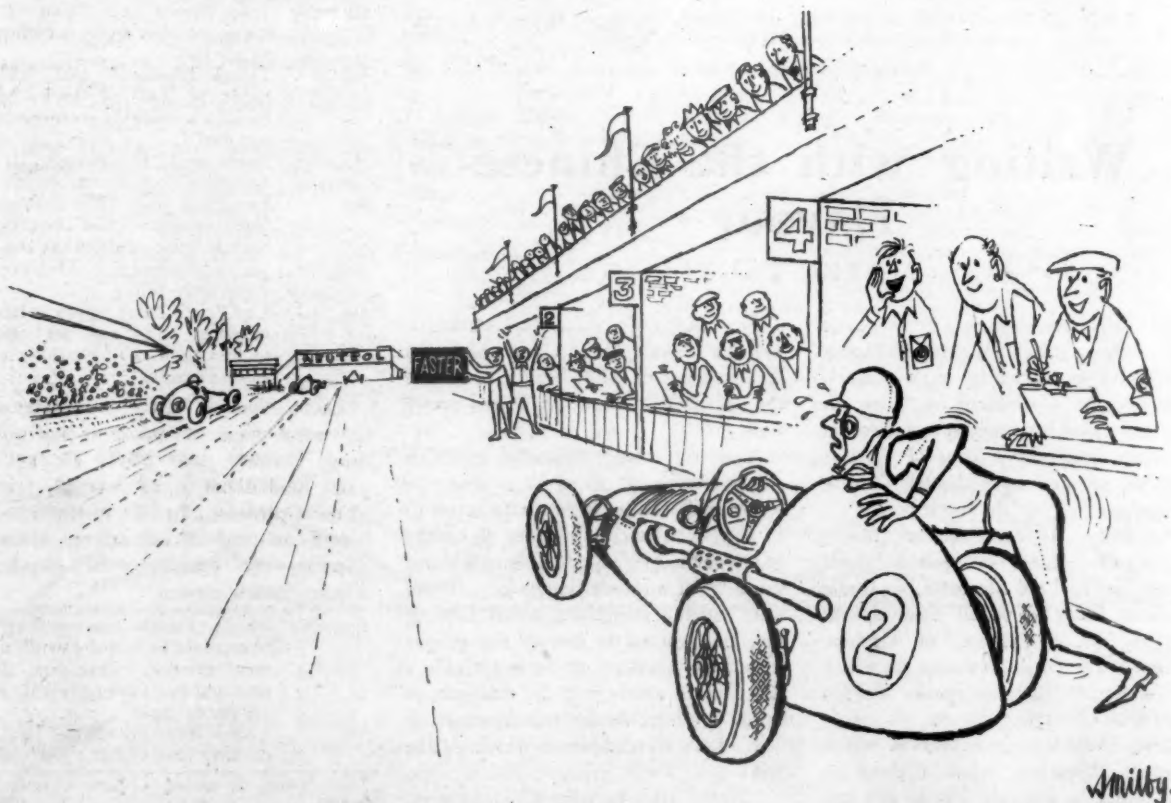
HER twenty-four cylinders  
Sounding off a tucket  
The two-litre Chataway  
Flashed by the stand.  
A dozen carburettors  
Swilled spirit by the bucket  
Of a most refined  
And expensive brand.

I asked the manufacturers .  
What advantage came from it  
When they pushed a record  
That little bit higher.  
"It's expensive," they admitted,  
"But we really make our name from  
it—

It boosts our reputation  
With the ordinary buyer.

"When he gasps at the performance  
Of the Chataway two-litre  
He thinks he's going to get it  
From the Chataway 'Cheroot'—  
Our new, economical  
Full six-seater  
With a two-stroke engine  
Hidden in the boot."

B. A. YOUNG



## CHESTNUT GROVE

Harry Furniss was on the *Table* from 1880 to 1894, when he left to found his own paper. He mostly drew parliamentary subjects.



A DREAM OF MARLBOROUGH HOUSE

H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES RECEIVING THE REPRESENTATIVES OF HIMSELF, AS DEPICTED IN THE VARIOUS ILLUSTRATED PAPERS.

July 17, 1886

## Writing with the Chinese Flavour

By LIN TAI-YI

I HAVE been reading a lot of novels lately in which Oriental characters figure prominently in the story, and become fascinated by how the Oriental mood is conveyed to the reader in these novels by a kind of Chinese English, or writing with the Chinese flavour.

Naturally, I don't mean pidgin English, and I am not talking about novels like Richard Mason's *The World of Suzie Wong* in which Suzie speaks English like a Chinese, or Graham Greene's *The Quiet American*, in which the character Phuong speaks English Indo-Chinese style.

I am referring to novels in which Chinese characters speak Chinese to each other in English, like in any one

of Pearl S. Buck's books, for instance, or in some books by John Hersey or James A. Michener or Vern Snider or any of the writers who know the Orient pretty well.

Now the chief difficulty which a writer encounters when he is trying to write a story with Oriental characters in it, of course, is the difficulty of having to create the proper atmosphere without the help of a second language. If you were writing something about France, say, and wanted to convey the proper mood, all you have to do is sprinkle a few French words into the dialogue, *et voila!* you have the French atmosphere.

We have all read novels which go like this:

"*Tiens!* Here he comes," said Pierre.

"*Alors*, let us have a bottle of wine. What about a Chateauf-neuf-du-Pape '43? It is a noble wine." And there you are.

It isn't hard to create the Italian atmosphere, either.

"Shall we order dinner, *caro mio?*" asked Maria. "What would the American *soldato* like? *Vino? Vino* and some ravioli? Wonderful!"

And there you are, again.

But writers about China don't have such an easy time of it.

One cannot write:

"小妹, come here. What should we do? Should we 吃饭呢? Or should we simply 吃麵?"

Think of the typographical difficulties. And besides, how much would that convey?

So the only thing for the writer to do is to try to convey the Oriental atmosphere by writing with the Chinese flavour, and writing with the Chinese flavour is a science. There are altogether four lessons.

**Lesson Number One:** Always describe the emotions and feelings of the characters organically.

**Example** Jane Brown said "I'm very happy because Betty is coming to see me."

**but** Lotus Blossom\* said "My heart is full of joy! My brother's wife is coming to see me!"

**Another example** Frank said "I'm hungry. It's twelve o'clock by my watch."

**but** Lee Ping said "My stomach feels empty. The sun has risen to the middle of the sky."

**Another example** Joe was scared. The cops were after him.

**but** Lee Ping's heart began to beat very fast, and his throat began to feel tight. The policemen were coming.

**Lesson Number Two:** Never refer to any mechanical, technical or scientific terms directly, and above all, avoid using medical terms, as these all smack of the Occident. In case of the illness or disabilities of characters, always describe the symptoms or physical characteristics instead.

**Example** Sheila Smith was suffering from myopia, but she wouldn't wear glasses. One day, she rammed her motor cycle into a telephone pole.

**but** Lotus Blossom always had a dreamy look in her eyes when

\*See lesson on giving Chinese characters names.

she tried to discern objects far away. One day she drove her self-advancing two-wheel vehicle into a wooden pole, which had been erected on the street and attached with wires for the purpose of conducting electric talk from one electric talking machine to another. (She had seen such a machine once, when she went to the big city Shanghai.)

**Examples** Cripple—although Lotus Blossom was pleasant to look at, she was born with one limb shorter than the other. Paralysis—Lee Ping could not move his right arm and right leg, and this caused him great inconvenience. Rheumatism—when the weather was foul, Lee Ping was wont to feel a great stiffness in his back. Headache—a great throbbing in the temples. Deafness—Lotus Blossom could not hear.

**Lesson Number Three:** The use of analytical writing. Always analyse objects and try to discover what their basic materials are, and refer to them only by their basic materials.

**Example** Frank took a handkerchief out of his overcoat pocket and mopped his head.

**but** Lee Ping took a square of cotton cloth from the slit which had been cut in his outer garment and wiped his brow.

**Another example** Frank came home from the office feeling hot and tired. He took off his tie and turned on the television set.

**but** Lee Ping returned from his place of work to his home, drenched with perspiration, feeling bodily weary, and as if his spirit had spent itself completely in the day's toil. To ease his wet discomfort he

took the length of printed silk which was knotted around his neck and untied it and flung it off. Then he turned on by means of a knob which controlled the flow of electric current the viewing-machine which brought magic shadow pictures before his eyes.

In the case of characters, always analyse their relationships to one another, and let them address each other only in terms of how they are related.

**Examples** Grandfather to grandson—son of my son.  
Aunt to niece—daughter of my sister (or brother).  
Niece to aunt—sister of my mother (or father).  
Wife to husband—father of my children (or child).  
Husband to wife—mother of my children (or child).  
When childless—Lotus Blossom, although your womb is barren and you are not fruitful, my heart is still full of tender feelings for you.

As for babies, the analysis must be carried a step further. They must always be referred to biologically, never be mentioned without denotation of sex.

**Examples** Lotus Blossom gave birth only to a female child. At last, a male child was born to the Lee family.

**Lesson Number Four:** In giving Chinese characters names, always give the female characters the name of a flower, or a fruit with the word "blossom" attached to the end.

**Examples** Lotus  
Lotus Blossom  
Pear Blossom  
Lotus Blossom  
Peach Blossom  
Lotus Blossom

"Cherry Blossom" is more suitable for Japanese female characters, when differentiation between oriental nationalities is important.

Always give male characters short names with easy spelling:

**Examples** Lee Ping  
Lee Chong  
Lee Fong  
Lee Ming  
Wong

Names like the following should be avoided:

Hs'ü Ts'ehhsiang  
Tcheochieh Hsiung  
Chuan Hsiayi

Wherever possible, give the meaning of a Chinese name. Readers are not happy until they know exactly what a Chinese name means. They expect to know.

By these methods, the Oriental mood is conveyed to the reader by the accomplished writer of English with the Chinese flavour. There is no need for the reader to learn how to read Chinese at all.

2 2

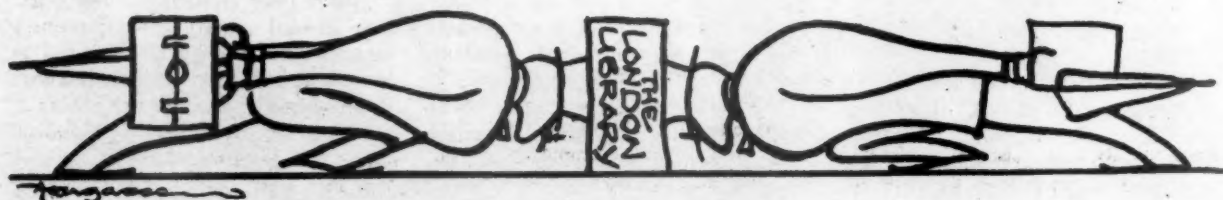
"Have you got what it takes to be a Rifleman? If you think you are 100 per cent fit and like adventure, there may be a job for you in a quick moving, quick shooting Rifle Regiment—The Royal Ulster Rifles (the 83rd County of Dublin and 86th Royal County Downs).

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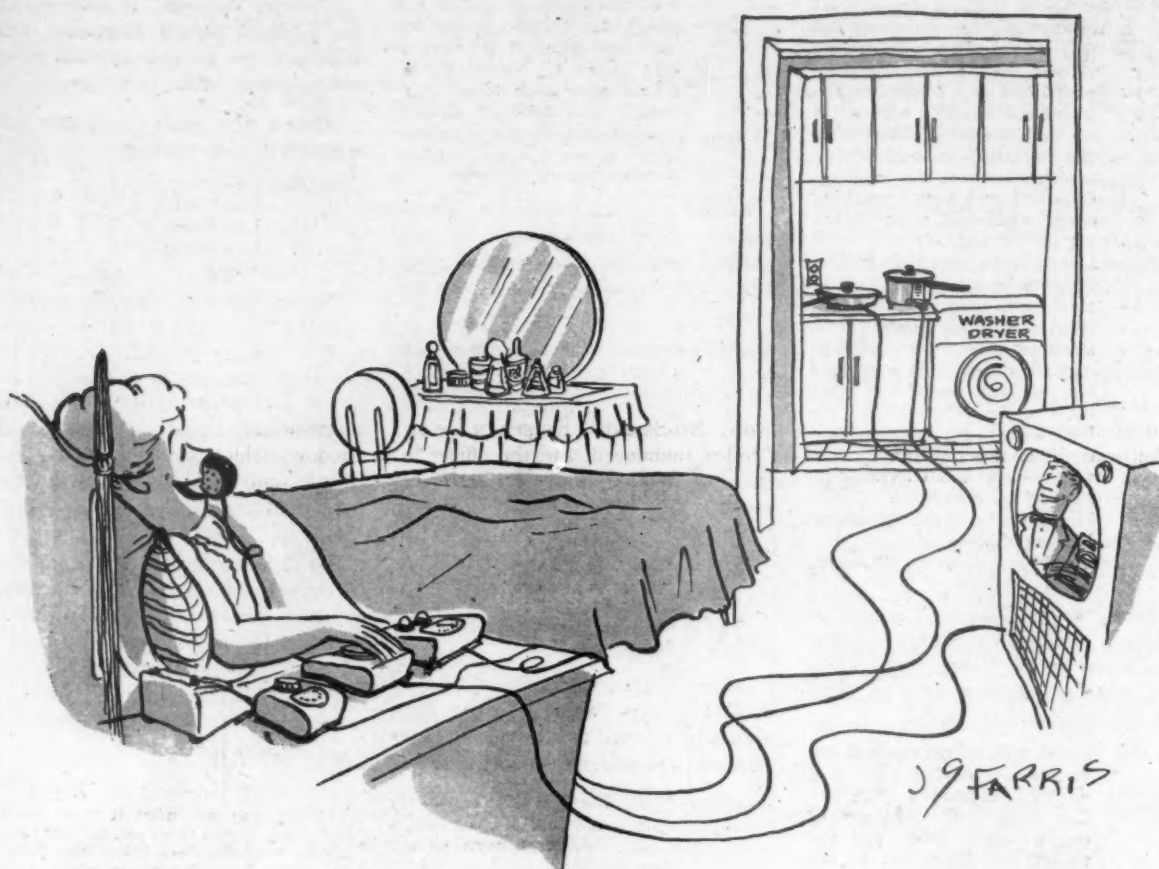
We did until that last bit.



# BOOK ENDS

Although the local authorities have held for eighty years that the London Library should be exempt from rates under the Scientific Societies Act of 1843, the Central London Valuation Court have overridden this decision and assessed its rateable value at the crippling figure of £11,000.





"Oh, I'm doing my housework—cooking, washing, you know . . . the usual."

## Inside Story

By J. MACLAREN-ROSS

"**B**EEN in prison before?" the Reception Officer asked Hooper. "Not," he said, "unless you count a night in the cells at Savile Row."

"D. and D.?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"Drunk and disorderly."

Hooper nodded. "Not a man until you've had a bash of that," the Reception Officer said cheerfully. "Any artificial teeth, truss, or other surgical appliance? Right! Cooper, isn't it?" He opened a big ledger, apparently similar in purpose to the Black Book kept by Jonathan Wild at the Debtors' Prison, and started to inscribe the name therein.

"Hooper—but I'm only here on remand. My bail's likely to be through any moment."

The officer glanced from the buff form in front of him to a calendar on his desk and a clock on the wall. "Looks like you'll be staying the week-end," he said. It was 6 p.m. on a Friday evening. "Empty all your pockets down that passage there, take off shoes and necktie. The hangman awaits."

Not the hangman, but another officer awaited, writing at a high Dickensian dais. "Take all your clothes off," he said. "Have you been in prison before?"

Presently, measured, weighed, bathed and fully dressed again—having elected not to wear prison clothing—Hooper was issued with kit stuffed in a pillow-case and locked by a warder into a small cubicle already containing a West Indian. On all sides voices shouted and

cell doors clanged-to on their new occupants. The West Indian rolled red eyes at Hooper: "Got smoke?" he asked. "Ah got match."

It was a fair exchange: Hooper had been allowed to keep his few remaining cigarettes but not his lighter. "What are you in for?" Hooper asked as they lit up. Already he felt like an old lag.

"Violence," said the West Indian. "Was mah landlord. Bad man, he took way mah lectric bulb. Too strong, he say, waste lectricity. Ah tell um 'Where mah bulb? Man you gimme back mah bulb, you thief.' Landlord doan like Ah call um thief. Say 'Ah doan give you no bulb you dirty black man.' Ah tell um 'You blacker man, Nigerian burgher, bad thief son abitch.' Den we

fight, he fall down, much blood, police come, say his neck cut, bring me here."

"What did you hit him with?"

"Side of mah hand. Very hard. Here, you feel."

"But you couldn't cut his neck that way."

"Very hard hand. Coppers say done wid chopper, Ah tell um doan have no chopper."

"Then you should have been in the clear."

"Yah, but dey find chopper wid blood, wrapped in shirt, up mah room in chimney dere. Say him mine, malicious wound, Ah tell um no guilty, dey doan believe."

"And was the chopper yours?"

"Man, dere's mah story, Ah stick right dere wid dis."

There was the shuffle of a queue forming up outside, the door was flung

open and a warder shouted "Get ready for your medicals."

"What's the time?" Hooper asked. The warder pointed to a clock: "Why worry? In here, time's a thing you got plenty of."

It was past seven, the last hope of bail that week-end had gone. Hooper said "Is the landlord dead?" to the West Indian.

"Him alive. Big pity."

Prison proved eventually to be a dimly lit high hollow structure, where officers rattled bunches of keys and echoing steel flights twisted up towards tiered galleries with wire netting stretched below. No SMOKING EXCEPT IN CELLS, a notice announced, and the officer in charge of Landing Three himself gave Hooper a light before he was faced by a locked door painted yellow, a judas window, and an enigmatic pencilled

scrawl: ITALIAN FRED IS A LOUSEY GRASS. A BLOKE'S BEST FRIEND IS HIS MOTHER. This was signed "PADDY": presumably a previous inmate informed upon by Italian Fred.

It was not long after, as he was making his bed down, that Hooper first became aware of Gaffney. He couldn't see him but he heard his voice. Like a voice from the Beyond it was heralded by the sound of tapping, and said quite plainly: "First time Inside?"

"Who the hell?" Hooper said, startled.

"Gaffney. Next door," the voice replied. "Speak close to the pipe." Hooper lay down on the bed near the steam-heating pipe underneath the window, which evidently acted as a sound conductor. "Can you hear me better now?"

"A treat. How d'you find your new digs?"



"That sort of thing is all right for people with gardens."

"I was in the Army for three years."  
Gaffney gave the ghost of a laugh.  
"What did they nick you for?"

"Debt. I didn't pay some bills."

"Section 13, Debtors Act 1869?"

"Wouldn't surprise me. And you?"

"Thereby hangs a tale. Alas too long to tell." Then he said "Light's due out any second. I've been here six weeks. You get to know."

He was right. Almost as he spoke, the bulb above the scrubbed deal table, not at all the high-voltage sort basically responsible for the West Indian's arrest, was extinguished and the moon came on instead, projecting the shadow of the window-frame across the opposite wall.

"May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest," Gaffney said via the pipe.

They met next morning on the narrow, railed board-walk, between the smell of slops being emptied and that of breakfast being dished up in the hall below, when Gaffney hurriedly thrust at Hooper an armful of Prison Library books including *Point Counterpoint*. But the story didn't come out until later, as they trudged round and round on exercise, the circular path worn slippery as a skating-rink and bordered by beds of budding tulips beneath high walls of dun-coloured brick.

"I," Gaffney said, "am the bloke responsible for the fact that you can no longer get change for a two-bob piece on slot-machines in the Tube." A lick

of blond hair flopped over his forehead into his eyes. "Before that I used to write songs. Tin Pan Alley stuff. But by dint of trial and error I managed to produce a coin of the correct size and weight to operate the machines. The milled edge was the main problem but in the end overcome. Result: one and a tanner a time, clear profit."

Young and pale and serious, he wore prison clothing, grey trousers and a brown sack-like jacket too big for him, so that he clutched his sleeves in his hands while walking and tripped every now and then over trailing turnups. "Needed organization, mind. D'you know how many Underground Stations there are from Acton Town to Woodside Park? Two hundred and seventy-three—but not all equipped with two-bob machines. We'd to make a planned survey and then my team had only covered a quarter of the territory before I myself was lumbered. A coin got stuck, an officious Tube official, and the whole sweet racket went up the spout. Now they've blocked up the slots."

"What did you get?"

"Acquitted," Gaffney said. "Lack of proof. We'd the plant well tucked away and all dismantled before they got to it."

"Then why are you in here now?"

"The spirit of adventure," Gaffney said. "Otherwise called not knowing when to leave well alone. I ought to get three years this time."

"Inside, one and all!" roared the officer in-charge, and soon they were back on the boardwalk where a brisk traffic in paper-bound books went on (one Irish boy even leaping down on to the netting and climbing back again in order to secure a science-fiction mag which had fallen short when flung from the opposite gallery) before they were locked in again until dinner-time.

That afternoon, in the exercise yard, Gaffney continued his story. "You've heard the Postmaster's radio appeal asking people to cross postal orders more thoroughly? Well that's on account of me again. We made a big haul from a bookie's down the City, no breaking and entering, just me and my girl-friend got up as staff, stopped the postman in the hall, said we'd take the mail up, huge great bag, van waiting, rushed it out the back way before the real clerks arrived. Then special ink

remover, my invention. We mucked up two hundred quid's worth of P.O.s before getting it right, had to burn the lot, nearly broke my heart. All cheques sent back, anonymously of course, I don't believe in any truck with banks, too risky and there's no point in causing needless trouble to others. Everything's going like a dream when I get pinched again. Squad car stopped alongside me one night, two coppers coming the other way; after someone else as it turned out, but like a fool I bolted. Guilty conscience, see where it gets you?" and the answer seemed to be the asphalt path, the West Indian walking splay-footed ahead, and the Assizes Gaffney was to come up before the following week.

On Monday afternoon Hooper's bail came through, while Gaffney was downstairs seeing his lawyer, so they didn't say good-bye; but Hooper bequeathed him some cigarettes he'd been allowed to buy, and often wondered how he was getting on when, having paid a large sum into court, he was a free man again. And then one day, in a pub off Charing Cross Road, there he was: green velvet coat, silk shirt, twill trousers and a Havana cigar, ordering Scotch.

"Don't mean to say you got off?"

"Complete acquittal," Gaffney said, "I made a full confession, talked for damn near an hour about the spirit of adventure and the raw deal my generation has had, angry young man stuff, you know, and I believe they were glad to see the back of me in the finish. I'd to promise to give up being on the bend, though, and I'm a bloke that keeps his word."

"Then how'll you make a living?"

"I've written what the boys up yonder reckon'll be a Top Twenty Tune—and all due to the good old Nick. *The Exercise Yard Song*." He hummed a few bars of something resembling *The Banana Boat Song*. "That West Indian fellow gave me the idea—he got five years by the way. Pity that, rough luck. Meantime, my number ought to start paying off soon."

Hooper was already late for an urgent business appointment. Wishing Gaffney luck, he plunged down the Tube where a long unmoving queue stretched half across the booking-hall. He crossed to the ticket-machines, but the only change he had was a two-shilling piece and the slots were all blocked up.

## CUSTOMS





# Essence of



# Parliament

IT has been a sad week in Westminster, for with the sudden death of Mr. Harry Boardman of the *Manchester Guardian* the House has lost one who by his wit, fine prose and strong judgment made a contribution to Parliamentary life greater than that of all but a small number of the House's Members. He will be long missed.

Lord Ingleby, whom the House of Commons used to know as Mr. Osbert Peake, has discovered that rates of fines for the use of obscene language vary erratically from town to town. In London they sting you only 40/-. In Cheltenham it is up to £10. The average is betwixt and between at something around a fiver, and the House of Lords is determined to straighten all this out and reduce things to a dull and grey uniformity. What a pity! Would it not be much nicer to have lovely shaded maps, produced by the Stationery Office, showing the rates in various places like the variations in the rainfall, and perhaps road-signs by the highway "Be warned. You are now entering the £8. 10. 0 area"?

There is nothing like local patriotism for transcending a party difference. Mr. Hayman from one side of the House joined metaphorical hands with Mr. Geoffrey Wilson from the other to tell the Chairman of the Kitchen Committee that he does not know what a Cornish pasty is, and Lancashire Members, irrespective of party, every man of them and Barbara Castle into the bargain, crowded the benches to mourn the hardships of cotton. The Conservatives may have gained in popularity elsewhere. They do not seem to have gained much in Lancashire, and Lancashire Conservatives, Sir John Barlow and Mr. Fletcher Cooke, were as vigorous as any Socialist in their denunciation of Government

inaction. Yet it is far from clear what the Government should do. Half the time the Socialists say that the only answer to Communism in the Far Eastern countries is to build up their industries. The other half they spend saying that they should not be allowed to sell the goods that they have made with those industries. On the Free Trade argument it must be accounted a good thing that goods are cheaply made. On the Imperialist argument it must be accounted a good thing that they are made within the Commonwealth, and indeed Sir David Eccles was able to get a cheer from all Conservatives who did not come from Lancashire when he accused Mr. Harold Wilson, that erstwhile Empire Free Trader, of wanting to keep out Commonwealth goods. The Government got its



Mr. Hugh Dalton

majority all right. The Lancashire Conservatives abstained, but the Liberals made up by voting for it, but I do not know that it was out of love of Sir David that either Conservatives or Liberals voted. Somehow he has a way of not seeming so very right even when he is right, and it is a nice question how it would all have gone if it had not been for Mr. Maudling coming to the rescue in a very effective closing speech.

The Liberals having rallied to the Government over cotton on Tuesday, received in return the kindly patronage of the Chancellor on Wednesday, squeeze-ease in pocket, for their championship of profit sharing. And it was right enough that they should receive it, for were not Heathcoats Ltd.—in the days when Heathcoat Amorys were still Liberals—the pioneers of profit sharing in this country?



Mr. Hamilton Kerr

If ever there was a man without guile, the soul of integrity, it is Mr. Glenvil Hall, but I cannot help wondering whether it was really a slip of the tongue which caused him to refer to Dr. Dalton as "my right honourable friend, the Bishop of Auckland." It is a slip that has been made so often, from Oliver Stanley's time onwards. The House

always loves it, and no one loves it more than the Doctor himself, who turns round and grins and preens himself and waves gaily to his friends in this quarter and in that. Random cries of "Lambeth" greeted Mr. Glenvil Hall's slip, if slip it was. It is a doubly good joke because it is funny whichever way

you take it—particularly in this week when every Walk is a Lambeth Walk. Some people are inclined to think the idea of Dr. Dalton as a clergyman perfectly ridiculous.

Others can hardly imagine him as anything else—Broad Church, clean, uplift stuff indeed—no court flunkey he—but every inch of him parsonic. It all came in very aptly in this Finance Bill debate. He had just finished a good, manly talk about the abolition of the differential Profits Tax. An unpromising subject for a Boys' Club, you may think, but then a Man's Man can find the moral lesson that the Straight Path is the Best Path in any subject, however uninspiring.

All bad things come to an end, and at last "it cometh to evensong." Believe it or not, the Committee stage of the Finance Bill did at last come to an end at 2.30 a.m. on Thursday, July 3, and as Members trooped off to bed was there an episcopal hand from Auckland raised over them in solemn benediction? I should like to think that there was, but whether there was or not I cannot say, for, alas! I did not stay there to see.

PERCY SOMERSET



### Making Money with the Bankers

SOME of the great fortunes of the last generation were made out of banking. These were, however, essentially the fruits of private and merchant banking collected when partnership profits were not taxed at the exorbitant rates that apply to-day. Singularly little money has been made recently by the multitude of shareholders in the joint-stock banks, those mammoth institutions that have absorbed in their efficient maws the local banks that used to cover the country.

The austerity with which bank profits have been earned and distributed does not fit with that widespread belief that "banks create their deposits." If this were true and if every bank loan and investment created a corresponding deposit on the other side of the balance sheet the dream of Cræsus would have come true. At no cost, save that of keeping the accounts, the banks could, according to this belief, cause their stock-in-trade to materialize like a conjurer's rabbits out of a hat.

Reality is less simple and alluring than this abstract vision would suggest. The banks have to fight for their deposits, they also have to pay for them. Their power to expand credit is very strictly circumscribed by the actions of the Bank of England, and the policy of the Government. Until last week the initiative of the powers-that-be has been exercised in the direction of contraction and not expansion.

Even if these El Doradian possibilities dissolve, on closer inspection the immediate investment merits of bank shares remain considerable. As befits the institutions themselves, there is no prospect of anything really spectacular in this market; but it offers most of the gilt of the gilt-edged market plus a little something that gilts have not got. That "something" is the occasional stepping up of the dividend that most banks have deemed it wise to declare in recent years. Since 1952 each of the "Big Five" has increased its distribution: Lloyds by 4 per cent, the National

Provincial by 3 per cent, and the Westminster, the Midland and Barclays by 2 per cent. This is less spectacular than some other equities, but better than the inexorably even course of Consols and very much better than the spectacular slide in the distribution on certain ordinary shares.

There are good reasons why bank shares should be considered now by the wise investor. In the first place they give reasonably high yields. Usually the yields on the best bank shares are geared very closely to those on gilt-edged securities. To-day the shares of the Big Five give a return of between  $5\frac{1}{2}$  and  $5\frac{3}{4}$  per cent as against a 5 per cent yield on Consols.

Secondly it is in a period of falling interest rates that banks and discount houses tend to make their largest profits. One reason for this is that the value of investments goes up when interest rates are going down. Bank shares are

### In the Country



### King Willow

KING WILLOW is a cliché of those summer hours ruled mainly by 250,000 or more new bats (every year) in scarcely-disputed supremacy. Yet for the enthralled townee millions the association between batsmanship and willows is fanciful and distant. For the matter of that, bat willows are not legally timber trees—and may possibly be ranked as weeds. (Weeds worth perhaps £10 each.)

The growing of bat willows is quite a business. The man who normally raises basket-willow rods, which are ripe in one or two years, probably frowns at bat willows: "Awful long time to wait for your return!" But the forester, trained in longer perspectives and on the basic idea that "A man seldom lives to reap the value of the trees he plants," brightens at the thought of getting quick money, since bat willows are merchantable when between twelve and twenty years old.

But the bat willow is a choosy tree: she'll not flourish in any stagnant boggy

relatively cheap to-day, partly because the fall in the prices of their short and medium-dated Government securities has in many cases carried their market value below the figures at which they appear in the banks' balance sheets. As this deficiency disappears—and it surely will—bank shares will tend to recover.

The day may also come when banks take a more direct interest in the finance of hire purchase than they do to-day. The Commercial Bank of Scotland is, in this respect, blazing a trail which may lead other banks to these lush H.P. pastures.

One final tip: if bank shares are so full of promise this must equally apply to Bank Units, one of the trusts of the Bank Insurance Group. In these units the investor will find the best of the bank shares all rolled into one well-diversified investment.

LOMBARD LANE

ground but demands the best of everything. And she needs attention of garden rather than forest intensity: you must forever be rubbing off buds (to discourage branches which would make knots—which bat-makers do *not* want) and fidgeting about mulching, staking and stem-form till raising babies looks carefree and simple. Above all, she (yes, it is she: *Salix alba*, var. *cœrulea*) is susceptible to pests and ailments, most particularly to the deadly water-mark disease.

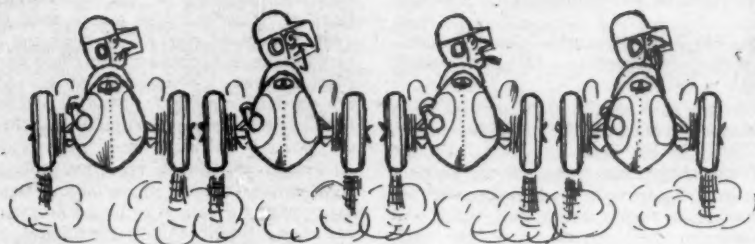
The percentage of casualties or failed bat-trees is shockingly high, as too many growers have the worst of reasons for knowing. And trees sold for secondary uses (artificial limbs, the making of those punnets in which you buy strawberries and raspberries, for matchsticks, paper manufacture, skittles and even polo balls) never bring an adequate return for the long hours and care spent to promote teen-age maturity.

There has been much ill-judged, over-optimistic planting, yet some chances have been overlooked. Why not more bat willows round sewage farms? Bat willows have bluey-grey foliage and are decorative in a reserved semi-pyramidal way. A plantation, being openly spaced, looks more like a fruitless orchard than a forest.

J. D. U. WARD

"PIRIE WILL SKIP THE 3 MILES"  
Daily Mail

That should make the selectors jump.



## BOOKING OFFICE

### French Without Tears

**An Age of Fiction:** The French Novel from Gide to Camus. Germaine Brée and Margaret Guiton. Chatto and Windus, 25/-

**T**HIS is a first-rate guide to the French novel of the last sixty years. It provides a chart in which all the main movements may be plainly followed, giving about the same amount of space to every novelist individually considered, so that a smooth flow of comment is achieved which makes the whole picture easy to grasp. It is impossible—indeed, undesirable—to write this kind of book without some emphasis on personal preferences, but on the whole these are kept to a minimum. I know the French have never heard of an index, but what a splendid gesture it would have been if the English publishers had risen above that and constructed one of their own.

The authors dealt with here are: Gide: Proust: Duhamel: Romain: Martin du Gard: Aragon: Aymé: Green: Bosco: Giono: Mauriac: Bernanos: Cocteau: Giraudoux: Céline: Queneau: Malraux: Saint-Exupéry: Sartre: Camus. Professor Germaine Brée is already known for her excellent Proustian study which appeared over here under the title of *Marcel Proust and Deliverance from Time*.

The point that immediately strikes one after reading this book is the necessity felt by the French novelist to have a philosophic basis to his novel. In the background there must be a drip-dry thesis, something that need not inconvenience the story but can be produced by critics as evidence of the writer's seriousness of purpose. The public expect it, even demand it. This is at once the strength and weakness of the French novel.

"When André Gide and Marcel Proust started to write in the last decade of the nineteenth century," says Professor Brée, "the French novel, as written by their contemporaries, was

an object of open disdain in the symbolist and decadent groups that both those young men frequented." One wonders if there is any branch of writing that is so consistently assailed as the novel. The particular hatred of poets (e.g. Valéry), its demise is for ever being announced—and for ever postponed as some new exponent appears whose efforts cannot be laughed off by those who have come to bury rather than praise the novel as an art-form.

It was Proust's opinion that intellectual force in itself is not the greatest requisite of the novelist. Feeling, rather than thinking, is what was chiefly required, he suggests, although thinking is of course obviously important too.

## NOVEL FACES



### XXIV—WILLIAM SANSOM

*Sight, sound and smell pervade his subtle style,  
As Sansom scans the humdrum with a smile.*

Professor Brée, one suspects, in her heart would agree with this judgment but feels herself, as a critic, overwhelmed by a tendency among later French novelists to follow the philosophic line of Gide rather than to explore further the nature of the individual as in Proust.

As a result of the egalitarian allotment of space applied to this book we find authors of very different achievement rubbing shoulders together. Georges Duhamel, Jules Romain and Roger Martin du Gard represent the long chronicle novel: François Mauriac and Georges Bernanos, the Catholic approach: André Malraux and Antoine de Saint-Exupéry the men of action: Marcel Aymé, Julien Green, Henri Bosco, Jean Giono, Jean Giraudoux, Raymond Queneau, differing greatly from each other, are bound together by a taste for fantasy. Jean Cocteau is well described as "a modern Daedalus," and, equally, the ex-surrealist later Communist André Breton and Louis Aragon "like Salvation Army converts."

Montherlant is rather summarily dismissed as a novelist (though not as a dramatist), one feels, possibly for political reasons; although Céline, whose wartime behaviour was also open to criticism, is examined in some detail. Marcel Jouhandeau's extremely amusing studies of married life in difficult circumstances are no doubt rightly excluded on the grounds of being too autobiographical. I should, however, have liked just a mention of Jules Supervielle's two short novels about Colonel Bigua.

Professor Brée finishes up with the two existentialists, Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, now at daggers drawn in literary disagreement. Although she draws attention to some pretty serious rents in the philosophical foundation of his novels, recognizes his inability to "create character" and admits that his desire for "commitment" merely means being "committed" to his own opinions, she is





"And furthermore I'd be grateful if you'd stop referring to our distinguished guest as Rasputin."

impressed by M. Sartre as a novelist. I cannot share her enthusiasm. I find M. Sartre perhaps the greatest contemporary example of the Emperor's New Clothes. About M. Camus, a much more interesting writer, but also one whose reputation has become perhaps a little over-inflated of late years, she has some penetrating things to say. Indeed the whole volume is a most useful contribution to the understanding of modern French literature.

ANTHONY POWELL

**The Endless Colonnade.** Robert Harling. Chatto and Windus, 15/-

Mr. Harling has forsaken the Street of Adventure for an amorous-adventure-travelogue in a Palladian décor: a recently widowed, middle-aged psychiatrist, embarking on a cultural sightseeing tour of Italy with a wartime army comrade, finds himself captivated by an infinitely understanding Neapolitan *poule-de-luxe*; bequeathed top-secret plans by a treasonable schizothyme-physicist; and pursued by hostile agents, disguised as Franciscan friars, against Hitchcockian backgrounds—including a seminarist soccer-match disrupted by a pack of hounds, and St. Peter's steps where a Catholic Trade-Union Convention is being blessed by the Pope. The accidental murder of the narrator's friend and an off-beat outcome to the love-affair provide the modish climax to a novel resembling disenchanted, slow-motion Dornford Yates. Some errors should be corrected in future editions: the traitor signs his suicide-note "Francis" (page 115) but is called "Peter" on page 135; his strict Catholic father, whose Faith he had renounced, can hardly have been a

"Reverend" (page 200); and Herbert Lom, not James Mason, played the psychiatrist in a film actually entitled *The Seventh Veil* (page 41). J. M-R.

**The Hunt for Kimathi.** Ian Henderson with Philip Goodhart. Hamish Hamilton, 21/-

A criminal of the first rank, Dedan Kimathi, leader of Mau Mau terrorists, reigned in his little dominion like one of the great megalomaniac tyrants of history. To speak in his presence without permission meant death, but there was magic in his oratory and his half-prophetic intuitions marked him as the ally of the god of the summit of Mount Kenya. Murderous, abominable, cowardly, he still had something of Hitlerian mastery in his presence.

Matched against him was Ian Henderson, white man wholly familiar with Mau Mau mentality and therefore able by simple persuasion to turn ambushed terrorists in a few days into loyal assistants. It was quite easy—when you knew how. In the end Kimathi himself was taken, his favourite prayer-tree fallen in a storm and most of his last followers killed by his own hand. This exciting book—marred only by the lack of scales of miles in its maps—is at its best in close-quarter descriptions of life in the Aberdare mountain jungles, cold and wet and incredibly full of thorns and beasts. C. C. P.

**Some Memories.** Lord Percy of New-castle. Eyre and Spottiswoode, 21/-

Politicians' memoirs are usually poor stuff but, apart from being tantalizingly short and fragmentary, these are well worth recommending. The late Eustace Percy ascribes his failure partly to aristocratic inability to be matey, partly to excitability, partly to being out of step with his party. He could not get his colleagues in the Cabinet to take Anglo-American relations seriously or to treat Education as being as important as Health and Housing. Some of the trouble was that he was donnish. When he left Politics he might have returned to the Diplomatic Service and taken the Washington Embassy but the vacancy did not occur at the right time and he spent his last, happy years in University administration, a period which he scamp.

His comments are unexpected and acute and his descriptions of people, especially Baldwin, are quite unlike those of other observers. It is a pity he never wrote a full account of his own times; as a writer on mixed history and politics he had some resemblances to F. S. Oliver, though he had wider sympathies.

R. G. G. P.

**Peninsular Paradox.** Peter de Polnay. Macgibbon and Kee, 18/-

In modern Spain, "progress and factories" is the battle-cry and "soccer has taken the place of internal strife" (even at the bull-fight in Jerez, the

*aficionados* brought portable radios to hear the latest cup-final news); "Here on the left is the Archbishop's palace," says Don Rafael in the cathedral at Seville, "Now we shall take a tram and visit a cement-works," yet during an earthquake in Granada, a terrified shoe-black shouts: "The spirits of the earth are on their way up"; Madrid has four rush hours, business is considered a form of poetry, whisky and filter-tipped American cigarettes are the outward signs of success: but in Andalusia, where every man's dream is to own a lorry, the Moorish influence still predominates, and in Galicia witches and witch-doctors are consulted in secret (diagnoses: 25 pesetas). Mr. de Polnay is entertainingly informative on long engagements, conjugal life, adultery, and present reaction to Franco rule; also food and statistics: "The cheese of Burgos is excellent and should be eaten in winter," "Avila has twenty-two thousand eight hundred inhabitants. In winter the snow is high." J. M-R.

**Zenobia.** Angus Heriot. Secker and Warburg, 16/-

Longinus, that eminent and unsuccessful philosopher, awaiting in prison the executioners of Aurelian, tells in the first person the story of his adventures as adviser to the Queen of Palmyra. In this witty and urbane story, quite free from romantic tushery, a scholarly author shows us the third century from an unfamiliar point of view. Zenobia, though she had great personal charm, lacked sex appeal; which was not surprising, since she was revolted by all the physical aspects of love. She was not really very bright, either as a patron of the arts or as a political and military leader. Her empire was a ridiculous confidence trick, which would have fallen through its own inherent absurdity even if Aurelian had not defeated her in battle. All the same, Zenobia was such a dear that intelligent men served her faithfully to the death. Or was Longinus so intelligent after all? A neat surprise ending leaves the reader pondering the real significance of an adventure story which will appeal to brows of every height. A. L. D.

**The Delinquents.** Anthony Bloomfield. Hogarth Press, 15/-

Mr. Bloomfield's second novel has more promise but rather less performance than his first. It is possible to fault it on several grounds. In some ways it is rather silly; but it shows a strong, groping talent. Its seedy hero, his slatternly mistress, his young, dewy mistress and her Councillor father with his band of shop-lifting adolescent girls are somehow real despite their unreality. The events, such as there are, are hallucinatory. At times it is difficult to know what everybody is getting so steamed up about. Yet the southern seaside town does come alive and the

dissection of bohemianism, public spirit and delinquency is not less impressive because it is neither trite nor convincing.

Mr. Bloomfield is an ungainly writer, but it may be because he is going somewhere; distance runners sometimes walk awkwardly. I am glad to have read his book, partly because odd scenes nag at my memory, partly because I expect a lot from his later novels. R. G. G. P.

**Victoria, Albert, and Mrs. Stevenson.**  
Edited by Edward Boykin. *Muller*, 25/-

"How imprudent that persons should be allowed to shoot at birds in the park!" said Victoria to Albert after an assassin had fired at her. History owes this gem, reported by Baroness Lezhun, to one of Mrs. Stevenson's voluminous letters to her family in America, which are published for the first time. Her husband was Minister in London from 1836-41, and they must have been an attractive couple, for in spite of strained diplomatic relations and shortage of cash they were quickly caught up in a social whirl that sent her home a permanent invalid. The Queen and the whole hierarchy became their friends.

Mrs. Stevenson was not witty, as claimed by her editor, who would have done better to cut a mass of pious sentimentality. But she was a sensible, observant woman and, though sometimes inaccurate, a first-class reporter (as she proved at the Coronation)—perpetually torn between republican ideals and delight in the gorgeous fruits of privilege. Intelligently skipped she is fascinating, for she came fresh to the early Victorian scene. E. O. D. K.

## AT THE PLAY

*The Trial of Mary Dugan* (SAVOY)  
*The Servant of Two Masters*  
(SADLER'S WELLS)

THIRTY years ago *The Trial of Mary Dugan* hit us pretty hard. The perambulatory violence of an American court of law was something new in the theatre, and arresting enough to make us uncritical of the weaker links in a story. Even now I can remember the effect of this play. But since then we have been hardened by a long diet of crime, and other authors have made us familiar with the spectacular oddities of American justice. All this has proved a little too much for poor Mary Dugan, whose legal adventure has become curiously old-fashioned. No longer magnetized by novelty, one asks

awkward questions about coincidence and about unexplained gaps in the plot. The trial is still reasonably entertaining, but the surprise packets are smaller than we had imagined.

This production, by Wallace Douglas, gives it every, or almost every, chance. I am not sure about Betsy Blair, who plays Mary, the golden-hearted tart who has educated her lawyer brother on her tax-free earnings and is accused of knifing her latest tycoon. Miss Blair's charm makes it clear that she will get off, but I thought she might have shown a little more anxiety. David Knight is good as the gangling, nervous young brother who rushes to her defence, and the other two counsel are strongly taken by Cec Linder and Alan Tilvern. But a serious omission on the programme leaves us searching for the name of the old actor who, during the interval, eats his sandwich lunch in the empty court, the curtain being left up. This is a beautiful, unhurried piece of mime that kept the non-drinkers happy and brought loud and well deserved applause.

When this article appears you will have four days left in which to see the Piccolo Company from Milan, in Goldoni's *The Servant of Two Masters*. They should have stayed longer at Sadler's Wells, for at the Edinburgh Festival a few years ago they made a great impression in the same play. I missed them there, and am very glad indeed to

have caught them up, for they are dazzling comedians, trained to the last flick of an eyebrow. The play is a *Commedia dell'arte* romp, half satire, half slapstick, mixing swooning lovers and scheming dotards and bungling servants into a splendid round of nonsense. The acting is so expressive that ignorance of Italian matters scarcely at all. Giorgio Sprehler's production gives the effect of a rehearsal on an enchantingly simple open-air stage. Each member of this accomplished team makes his mark, but the chief pleasure lies in the brilliant antics of three outstanding fools. Marcello Moretti, the Arlecchino, is a comic genius, a small rubber man of endless resource and the utmost dexterity. The famous scene in which he has to serve both his masters with dinner at the same moment becomes a juggling turn on the top line. Antonio Battistella is a wonderful Pantalone, a poem in tetchy senility, and Checco Rissone, whose voice seems to come from under the stage, a perfect foil to him. These are notable actors, in a style of which we see too little. Do catch them if you can.

## Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

*Flowering Cherry* (Haymarket—27/11/57) and *A Touch of the Sun* (Princes—12/2/58) are two honest plays with something to say. *The Rape of the Belt* (Piccadilly—18/12/57) is a witty attack on muscle-bound heroism. ERIC KEOWN



Mary Dugan—BETSY BLAIR

Jimmy—DAVID KNIGHT

## REP SELECTION

Playhouse, Sheffield, *Sweet Madness*, to July 19th.

Theatre Royal, Windsor, *The Chalk Garden*, to July 12th.

Oxford Playhouse, *Mr. Dollinger*, new play, to July 12th.

Castle, Farnham, *The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, to July 12th.



## AT THE BALLET

*Le Lac des Cygnes* (COVENT GARDEN)

ROWENA JACKSON, ballerina of the Royal Ballet, has at last broken through the emotion-barrier. Her faultless technique, her grace and beauty of form and movement are no longer artistic accomplishments and natural endowments to be seen and judged in a sort of distant detachment but a fully integrated projection of creative sensibility.

Dancing with the junior organization of the Royal Ballet in its short season at the Royal Opera House she appeared in the role of Odette-Odile in *Le Lac des Cygnes* in the place of Anya Linden, retired hurt, whom the critics had been invited to see in the part for the first time, before her expected promotion to ballerina rank.

We saw instead a proved exponent of the part; but with a striking difference. Odile, masquerading in dazzling effrontery as the Swan Princess with whom Prince Siegfried is in love, has given scope hitherto for Miss Jackson's brilliant virtuosity. Now, though lacking perhaps a shade in subtlety, it gives heightened pleasure because the same dancer has succeeded in communicating as never before the tenderness and pathos of the lovely maiden condemned by witchcraft to live her days as a white swan. Miss Jackson communicated the poetry as effectively as in the next act she was to dazzle us with devilry.

When, as in some continental companies, the parts of Odette and Odile are assigned to two different dancers, there may be some gain in theatrical effect;

but for the lover of the ballet there is satisfaction in seeing how the highly contrasted characters can be interpreted by one artist. The dual role has, in fact, become something of a test-piece, and few dancers come through with equal success in both parts. Rowena Jackson is now of that small company. She had the advantage of dancing with her talented husband, Philip Chatfield, as partner.

As it happened, the next afternoon provided an opportunity of seeing Anne Heaton, the junior company's leading dancer, in Act II of the same ballet. Her Swan Princess is gentle, poetic and mysterious and suffused with lyric poignancy but I have yet to see her sinister side.

C. B. MORFLOCK

## AT THE PICTURES

*Ice Cold in Alex**The Brothers Karamazov*

SIMPLICITY is the key word for *Ice Cold in Alex* (Director: J. Lee-Thompson): extreme simplicity of story, circumstances, scene, pattern, character. In essentials it is a straightforward group-journey-against-odds story, the scene is mostly desert, the people mainly concerned are only four in number, there are remarkably few incidents that can be summarized. Yet it proves to be enthralling for nearly two hours. Cue for a favourite observation of mine which I'm afraid far too few people can ever be got to believe: a very great deal depends on the way it's done.

It is a plain episode of the desert war,

the tale of Captain Anson and his sergeant-major who are charged with the duty of taking an old ambulance with two nurses to Alexandria from Tobruk in 1942, just before the siege. Anson is a brave man but he has, as the sergeant-major says, "had enough—of everything," including whisky, and in an alcoholic moment he causes the death of one of the nurses by crazily trying to drive past a German patrol. From then on the film is about four people: Anson (John Mills), Sergeant-Major Pugh (Harry Andrews), the other nurse (Sylvia Syms), and a man who has asked for a lift, saying he is Capt. Van der Poel, a South African (Anthony Quayle). Its grip is traceable to the skilful balance between two kinds of suspense. One is intellectual—for after a time they suspect Van der Poel of being a spy; the other, which can only be called physical, is aroused by the hazards and difficulties of the journey.

This second feeling is not easy to explain except by noting its connection, however remote, with the invariably effective solar-plexus-punch of a shot taken by the Cinerama camera mounted on something like a roller-coaster. The scenes here that involve tremendous physical effort against tremendous resistance, including one in which a man is dragged from a quicksand and a sequence near the end when all four are striving to get the heavy old ambulance up a terrifyingly steep hill, are immensely gripping and admirably done. They are, quite literally, sensational, which is not exactly a praiseworthy quality in a work of art; but the point is that they are balanced with scenes aimed at the mind and the emotions rather than the nerve-centres. Is the man a spy? If he is, what ought to be done about it—for not only does he twice get the little company past patrols, but he also saves them more than once by sheer strength and courage.

It's difficult to decide how much to reveal of the story. The fact that I knew it beforehand made not the slightest difference to my enjoyment, but perhaps some of you might object to being told. Anyway—it's splendidly done, it was worth doing (based on the novel by Christopher Landon, it is said to be true), and it says something worth saying that one remembers afterwards. All the players do well, but Mr. Quayle is most memorable because he has the most striking and unusual part.

The film of *The Brothers Karamazov* (Director: Richard Brooks) treats it as a story about Dmitri (Yul Brynner) which naturally ends as he goes off into the hopeful future with Grushenka. This may sound typical of Hollywood, but perhaps—the audience an expensive film has to attract being unlikely to take much interest in the philosophical-religious basis of the original—there was no alternative. This version was obviously very expensive indeed, and among



Van der Poel—ANTHONY QUAYLE

*Ice Cold in Alex*



its conscientiously faithful details there are many good things. The glossy Metrocolor photography (drenched in "barbaric" reds and greens) produces wonderful effects from time to time; Mr. Brynner is dominating and flamboyant as Dmitri, Richard Basehart is subtle as Ivan, William Shatner is saintly as Alexey, Albert Salmi is oily as Smerdyakov, Lee J. Cobb is spectacularly depraved as old Fyodor, Maria Schell is radiantly skittish as Grushenka—impossible to mention half the more or less important characters; all that careful reproduction could do has been done. Yet somehow it seems a waste. If there's no more to the book than this complicated string of incidents, why take all that trouble?

#### Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

There's another very good Western, *Man Hunt*: visually very attractive, full of character and convincing detail, with a simple hero (Don Murray) who doesn't like killing and no real villain, only a misguided man with an obsession. *Ten North Frederick* (2/7/58) is not wholly satisfactory but has excellent qualities. The entertaining French crime drama *Scandal in Montmartre* (2/7/58) and *Around the World in Eighty Days* (17/7/57), now in its second year, continue.

Only three of the new releases were press-shown, and none of those pleased me much. *Fraülein* (see "Survey," 2/7/58) is about the misadventures of a Berlin girl during and after the war; *This Happy Feeling* is an overpoweringly gay and whimsical story about a witty middle-aged actor (Curt Jurgens) who decides he is too old for a naïve impetuous girl (Debbie Reynolds).

RICHARD MALLETT

#### ON THE AIR

##### To Praise Him

IT is perhaps a little late to hail Sid Caesar, but I feel it would be churlish to allow his arrival to pass unnoticed here. Whether we like it or not, some of the best and even more of the worst that we see on the little screen nowadays is imported from the U.S.A. Mr. Caesar must be counted among the best, and the newspaper critic who complained that he didn't crack any gags must seek his pleasure elsewhere.

Mr. Caesar's fame came before him, and he had to justify the rather coy ballyhoo with which the BBC saw fit to pave the way for him. I can only judge by the first programme of his series "Sid Caesar Invites You," but I believe he proved himself immediately to be a television comedian of the first rank. The show was not perfect: rough edges showed through the polish here and there, and Jeremy Hawk's compering struck me as being inappropriately flat.



IMOGENE COCA .SID CAESAR

I also saw little originality in the dance routines put on to divert us while the principals changed their costumes. But I didn't care a bit. I found Mr. Caesar cunningly clever. He seeks out the unexpectedly comic in an apparently simple situation, and he does not trample it into the ground with over-emphasis, because he has a secret: he can act. His partner, Imogene Coca, is a very funny lady indeed. I had the feeling too that she could bring to life any Dorothy Parker character you might care to mention, for she seemed to me to *think*. This can be a useful habit for a comic, but it can lead only to third-rate posh sneery cabaret satire unless it is backed by a genuine talent for comedy acting—not to mention slapstick. Miss Coca has all this. So has Mr. Caesar. Between them they provided a most enjoyable half-hour.

I have tried to find an English comedy series which might stand comparison with "Sid Caesar Invites You," but without success. I have high hopes that one day Peter Sellers may yet save the side, if someone will let him have his way. As to the possibility of one of our TV shows being received with rapture across the Atlantic, I'm afraid that remains an improbable dream. From now on the world must learn the language of the U.S.A.: Uncle Sam is far too busy to start coping with Cockney and Yorkshire dialects at his time of life.

The revival of "The Royalty" (BBC) is the latest development in the soap-opera world, on a Channel that has no soap to sell, and it is very, very nice. Everything is polite, and genteel, and

British, and for all I know to the contrary it may be a faithful representation of life in a quiet London hotel. Be that as it may, I'm afraid that unless a nasty juicy villain turns up soon and starts raising hell, I'm going to fall fast asleep in the residents' lounge until the series closes. Miss Lockwood and Mr. Sinclair are worthy of better things than this. Why banish them to Mrs. Dale Land?

Yet another revival is "I've Got A Secret" (A-R). Here members of the public, presumably of their own free will, turn up to be questioned about their secrets. I have myself seen on this programme a group of Methodist clergymen proudly playing skiffle music of such an excruciating quality that I had to turn away to stop myself weeping with shame. When I turned back, they were being enthusiastically applauded. By and large, though, it is the resident celebrities that matter, for this is one of those TV kiddies' party games in which the members of a "panel" are encouraged to act madly at being natural, show off their profiles, and make one another snigger. In the year 1958 this counts as entertainment. It should not be forgotten, however, that we have made great strides in other directions.

HENRY TURTON

## LETTERS

(Letters addressed to the Editor, unless specifically marked otherwise, may be considered for publication.)

#### To the Editor of *Punch*

SIR,—If the *Punch* Diarist can foresee the birth of a boy who is at one and the same time an uncle and a first child of his parents, he must have in mind those genetic changes of which we have been warned as a result of excessive radioactivity. Or does he adhere to the White Queen's practice of believing six impossible things before breakfast?

Now I come to think of it, the White Queen's time dimension is obviously the one he inhabits.

Yours faithfully,

H. F. GAINSFORD

Curry Rivel, Somerset.

#### IN THE SANDS OF TIME

##### To the Editor of *Punch*

SIR,—The Triassic deposits are not known in Britain as Old Red Sandstone, as Stanley Price asserts in his article about collecting dinosaurs' tracks; they belong to the mesozoic period, whereas the Old Reds are Late Palaeozoic. I don't think either Carlisle or Lossiemouth rivals Connecticut Valley in its export of dinosaur tracks. 'On the other hand, Lossiemouth was once famous for its export of Ramsay MacDonald, whose footprints may be just as valuable in 200 million years' time.

Yours faithfully,

Newport, Mon.

N. F. EADY

FOR  
WOMEN



## Paris-super-Mare

PARIS, July 2

THE fashionable remedy for various ills and the inroads of time is thalassotherapy or treatment by seawater. The idea is not new. Our ancestors went to Brighton in the dead of winter and bobbed up and down in icy water for this complaint or that; and sea-water therapeutic stations exist along our coasts. But the thing about the new form of thalassotherapy, as practised to-day in Paris, is that instead of your going to the sea the sea comes to you.

Dr. Cormeille, its leading practitioner, invites you to enjoy all the health-giving virtues of a month beside the seaside in a session of séances in his second-floor flat near the Métro Wagram.

Not baths. To bring enough water from the Channel to the Métro Wagram would, the thing is evident, run up the costs. So a compromise has been sought and found; indeed an improvement on the sea-water bath. It is the treatment by spray which as well as curing rheumatism, decalcification, rickets, lymphatism, dental decay, acne, eczema, itch, neurasthenia and insomnia, gives you a delicious tingle as well.

In the domain of beauty the claims of the Centre Helio-marin are no less encouraging. General rejuvenescence of the organism; revivification of the skin. To which can be added—after the twenty minutes' spray bath—a sun-bathing brown-off under infra-red and ultra-violet lamps. And a sea-water gargle.

The set-up of a thalassotherapy centre is functional yet salty. Seagreen walls, wave-printed plastic curtains, a mermaid-and-seaweed medallion in white on cupboard doors. The operational

table—the place where you lie—is covered with a semicylinder shaped cloche in plexi-glass (not unlike the lid of a mummy case) from which your head projects at one end, your feet at the other. (The reason for the projecting feet is not clear: is the cloche designed that way for medicinal reasons or is it just a matter of *espace vital* for the really tall girl?) The head, on the other hand, at the other end is covered with a glass space-helmet affair; so that while your body is being saturated by a vaporous spray of seawater—and your feet are getting colder and colder—you are breathing into your city-vitiated lungs oxygen that has been run through seawater saturated with seaweed.

The seawater used at the Centre Helio-marin comes from well out to sea, off Trouville. It is collected *each week* by the *maitre-baigneur* and rushed to Paris in white plastic jerricans; for seawater, explains Dr. Cormeille, is a “living water” and “dies” if kept longer than eight days.

He is a great enthusiast and something of a philosopher too. “Our vital serum is very similar to seawater,” he tells you, “as are our tears.” His sincerity is incontrovertible. For in these days who but an honest man would have answered the routine question “Your treatment is of course slimming as well?” with this simple disclaimer: “*Au contraire*, it is fattening”? PHYLLIS HEATHCOTE



“The Queen’s smart miners’ outfit, which she donned when she went down Rothes colliery, may inspire a new fashion.”

*News Chronicle*

For smart miners, you mean?

60

## Leaves for Your Fig

ONCE ran to answer the telephone dressed in a bath-towel and a plastic turban. There was a visitor in the hall who turned out to be a dress-designer. He liked my drape, adopted it, and called it “Ligne de Bain.”

Since then I have been fashion-creation-conscious, casting dusters, table-runners, patchwork bedspreads and the like about my person with a swift and gay abandon, hoping to recapture, as the blackbird said, that first fine careless something.

One of my near-misses was a clothes-line in a gale which came down gracefully about my head and nearly swept the Season with the Laundry Line. Two spring-pegs ruined it, emerging like a pair of demon horns from heady froths of nylon underwear.

Another time a picnic tablecloth, well-spattered with tomato sauce, blew up against my chest, but our only pencil had been used to stir the tea and we simply couldn’t get the thing on paper. Roller-towels, tents, the Union Jack we hoisted on St. George’s Day, had basic qualities which lacked finesse. And then we took to decorating.

My big mistake, of course, had been to think of clothes as things of cloth. But as I handed up the first well-pasted strip of Bavarian Gential wallpaper true inspiration dawned. I let it fall; and you all know what happened after that.

HAZEL TOWNSON

☆

## The Blue Trapeze

THE hairdrier whirrs soporifically. I turn the glossy pages in a drowsy trance, hopeful that I shall emerge the counterpart of these serene creatures. I pause transfixed by the Trapeze Line,

oh so reminiscent of my appearance last year—and two years before that—and two years before that. Perhaps my three-quarters-length blue smock, rejuvenated with a built-in bell-tent petticoat, neckline scooped out and filled in again with *masses* of beads, helped out by clever accessories, might emerge as the new length, new line, new look. I have never reconciled myself to the fact that I am the particular one born that particular minute. I try. The result is sensational. I compare my mirrored reflection with the illustration surreptitiously torn from the hairdresser's magazine. The model, weight thrown forward on one hip, head reared back, wearing an expression of fey elegance, obviously conceals nothing. I console myself that I too look a little fey, but alas! too obviously could conceal anything from triplets down. My first public appearance is dramatic. My husband reels and clutches his cheque book. The daily mutters darkly that if there's to be all that washing again she'll have to ask for her cards. The neighbours whisper, and my mother-in-law asks resignedly do I want them knitted in blue again, or will I just settle for white and be on the safe side.

Explanations are tedious, and once the initial shock is past it seems a pity to waste it. I think I shall have them knitted in pink.

MARJORY JOHNSTONE

☆

### Sales Resistance

I HAVE a nature far above  
The urge to join a queue  
And storm a shop and fight and shove  
As other women do.

I am aloof, exempt, because  
I scorn the female creed  
That being cheaper than it was  
Must make a thing a need.

So now, while yet the battle-roar  
Engulfs the bargained aisle  
I sit at home and give once more  
A most superior smile

That's not entirely free from care;  
I earn my blissful state  
With sheets at sixty bob a pair  
Instead of forty-eight.

ANGELA MILNE

### Bell-Bottom Trousers

OF course it may be too late to take my advice, in which case you can only pass it on to the next generation. But I hope you can benefit personally. It's quite simple. Marry a sailor.

I have to admit that a great deal of time is wasted on such activities as dressing overall, splicing the mainbrace, summer cruises and target practice. The fact remains that the Navy makes them do their own washing, which is enough to reconcile a sensible girl to junior wives in any number of ports, especially if they do some of the ironing. Washing-machines aren't the same thing at all, they can't fix your leaky radiator with a round turn and two half-hitches, nor can they be adapted for dealing with a thatched roof threatening to blow off in half a gale.

I'm not quite so wholehearted about naval cooking. After all, there are bound to be some things you can't escape, and I'd rather officiate even in the galley of a small boat than live on bully beef and cocoa. But you don't have to go to sea to discover that a naval training extends to things you genuinely can't do yourself. For instance, I once went abroad with a trunk roped up by a couple of ex-able-seamen. It was just after the

war, and I might have been exporting anything at all, but the Customs at Dover were so daunted by the sight of thirty yards of expertly-knotted rope that they wrote their little squiggles without a word, and the trunk travelled inviolate as far as Marseilles, where they are all sailors in one way or another, and will do it up again after they have accidentally blacked your eye getting it open.

With a naval man, however intermittently, about the house you are safe from having to phone the Fire Brigade to rescue the cat. More important still, you are safe from that great scourge of the emancipated housewife—the well-meaning male helper. You know the sort of thing: they offer to lend a hand with the china cupboard, and when they've shattered the Wedgwood they need a stiff drink and a great deal of consolation; and that's the end of spring-cleaning, not to mention your expectations from great-aunt Emily who gave you the jug. So think of all the washing-lines that will need putting up, the Christmas decorations that will need taking down, the steps that will need whitening and the shoes that will want blacking, and mark my words. Sailors may be hard to land: at least when it's done they tie the knots themselves!

RUTH LESSER



"Miss, will you marry me?"



# A. J. WENTWORTH, B.A. (Retd.)

## A Trip to New York

By H. F. ELLIS

*The publication in America of Mr. A. J. Wentworth's revelations of life in an English preparatory school led naturally enough to a long-standing invitation from the rather oddly-named Society of the Friends of A. J. Wentworth to go and lecture over there, either on "The British Boy" or "The Will to Learn" ("As if there were some connection!" Wentworth himself notes). Shortly after the appearance in the West Acre and Fenport Advertiser of his unluckily timed letter demanding a Request Stop at Penfield Road and while replies to it were still enlivening subsequent issues of that paper, Mr. Wentworth took advantage of this opportunity (return passage paid) to get what he calls "a change of air." What particularly upset him was the Advertiser's failure to print in full "my own disclaimer, in which I made it quite clear that had I been in possession of the facts I should never have written the original letter." The only reference in the paper to this second letter was an editorial note, thanking "36 other correspondents, including Mr. Wentworth himself, for pointing out that there is already a Request Stop at Penfield Road." This, he complains, made him look a fool. So he went to America.*

*The notes he has sent me of this adventure are somewhat fragmentary, and cannot easily be knit up into a connected or coherent narrative. Some of them take the form of hurried pencillings on railway time-tables and menus, and there is occasional evidence that Wentworth, like many travellers before him, found Bourbon a new experience. All one can do is to take a jotting here and there, just for the record.*

### At Sea

THERE are nineteen coat-hangers in my cabin. One realizes, of course, that life at sea is a very different kettle of fish from life on land, and on the second day out one has hardly had time to sit down and get one's sea-boots on as the saying goes. But even so! I doubt whether there were as many as nineteen in the whole of Burgrove, excluding the Matron's which I have naturally not counted. I have also got ten light-switches, apart altogether from the bathroom, which is full of towels—two bath towels and from four to eight face towels. It is

difficult to be more precise, because whenever I damp one, or even disarrange it, the steward takes it away and brings two more. One dislikes causing trouble, but even when I pat my hands lightly against the inside of the towel without unfolding it, he notices, and takes it away. Rich people are used to this sort of thing, I dare say, but I would just as soon hold my hands out of the port-hole and let them dry in the breeze as make all this fuss and pother every time I wash. Actually, one is warned not to open the scuttle oneself but to send for the steward, so it would be cutting off his nose to spite his face really.

The steward came in as I was jotting down these first impressions of life at sea, so I showed him the coat-hangers and asked him what the idea was. He said the idea was to hang coats on them—not meaning to be impertinent I think, for he is a civil and well-spoken fellow, but misunderstanding my drift.

"Exactly," I said. "But why nineteen?"

To my embarrassment he suspected a complaint and would have brought

another half-dozen had I not stopped him in time. Apparently people do make complaints from time to time on these ships, ludicrous as the idea may seem to anyone accustomed to life on the pay of an assistant master.

"Surely," I asked, to make my point clearer, "people don't cross the Atlantic with nineteen coats? Not in this direction, anyway."

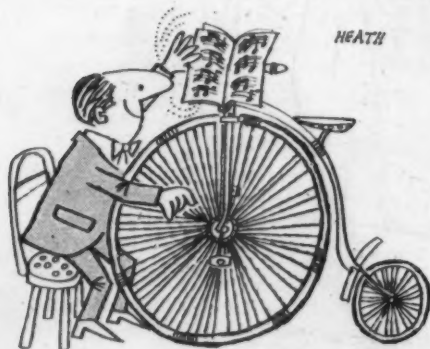
He said I should be surprised what some people crossed the Atlantic with, and not quite knowing what he meant I left him and went up to the sun deck, where I was handed a cup of broth. There seems no end to the luxury and thoughtfulness on these great ships.

After broth, I went and looked at the Atlantic. It is surprisingly black near the ship when you look down, except where it is churned up and frothing and so on; but further off it is green—unless the sun is shining, in which case it is blue as at Broadstairs. I mention this because people who have never crossed the Atlantic may think they are missing something, whereas in fact it is much the same in the middle as it is at the edges, though deeper naturally. Still, one looks at it a good deal.

\* \* \* \* \*

One of the funnels is full of old rope. I discovered this quite by chance while up on the top deck wondering whether Mrs. Duval expected an apology.\* A sailor opened a door in the side of one of these huge flues and disappeared from sight under my very eyes. Naturally I thought he had fallen down into whatever it is the funnel is connected to below, and was on the point of raising a cry of "Man down the funnel!" or whatever was appropriate when he reappeared with a length of cable and a broom. I could hardly have been more astonished if I had seen the Vicar back at home take a bottle of port out of one of the organ pipes.

\*I have asked Mr. Wentworth to explain this allusion, but he declines.





"Isn't that that awful travelogue couple working for Channel Nine?"

I mentioned the incident to the Purser, who took it very lightly. It was quite a normal thing, he said, to have a false funnel, and he explained that when this ship was built passengers thought a single funnel was a bit *infra dig*. "Besides," he said, "she looks better with two."

I must say I thought it sailing a bit close to the wind.

"Supposing they started doing the same sort of thing with railway engines?" I said. "Or motor cars and so on?"

He said that cars no longer had funnels, a fact of which I did not need to be reminded. "I am speaking generally," I said. "If I were to buy a six-cylinder car I certainly should not expect to find that two of the cylinders

were intended for the storage of bits of rag, spare nuts and bolts and so on. Is not the parallel disturbingly close?"

The Purser said he thought not. No deception was intended. The ship was not at present in the market, but if at any time she was put up for sale he felt sure the Company would include "one dummy funnel" in the specification. Meanwhile "it isn't, as if we blew dummy smoke through it" he added, with what seemed to me an odd confusion of thought.

I don't know what to think, I am sure. It would be a fine thing if half the lifeboats turned out to be made of cardboard and only put there because they made the passengers feel safer. I put this point to a man at my table

called Rumbolt, who is quite an experienced traveller, and he said it was all over the ship that I was claiming a reduction for misrepresentation of funnels. "You ought to come back on one of the *Queens*," he said. "They carry two Captains." I could make no sense of this remark. Surely he doesn't mean that one of *them* is a dummy?

\* \* \* \* \*

I am tired of being told to "wait until you see the New York skyline." One has no option. If it was Americans who made the remark I could understand and sympathize; one naturally likes to make the best of one's own country in advance. But the worst offender is Rumbolt, who is as English as I am.

He is simply being the patronizing "old hand," and will no doubt take all the credit for the view when we *do* see it. Just because he has seen these skyscrapers before he seems to be under the impression that he put them up himself—just as poor old Rawlinson used to say "Why don't you go to my dear Provence next hole?" on the strength of ten days there, seven of which I know for a fact he spent in a hospital at Orange.

Somebody sighted a whale yesterday, but I was asleep.

Thick fog from the Nantucket Lightship onwards. So the New York skyline was neither more nor less impressive than a row of beans at midnight. I should have been sorry about this, but for Rumbolt. "Never known such a thing in all my fifty-four crossings," he said. "You don't know what you're missing."

"Is this your *fifty-fourth* crossing?" I asked in amazement.

"It is and all, boy," he said.

"In that case," I replied, with as much calmness as I could muster after being addressed in such a fashion, "surely you must have started from the wrong side?"

"When I say 'crossing,'" he explained airily, "I mean of course the

double event—there and back, boy, there and back."

Well! I am the last person to make a hasty or unkind judgment, but I am bound to say that had he been a member of my IIIA Mathematics set I should have told him that the only honourable thing to do when caught out in a lie is to own up. I hardly think he is the kind of person to be a successful "unofficial ambassador" (which, in a sense, one is here) in a country where tact and a determination to treat people as equals are of such vital importance.

Perhaps fortunately, I was saved from the necessity of replying by the intervention of an American who pointed out to me the Statue of Liberty, just discernible through the murk.

"Why, it's tiny!" I cried involuntarily, adding, in case he should think I was in any way belittling the famous symbol, "Not that mere size is of any significance. We Englishmen have at least, in a thousand years of history, learnt *that*."

"I certainly trust," he said after a pause, "that you will have a fruitful and interesting stay in my large young country, Mr. Wentworth." There is a grave courtesy about the best type of American that is altogether refreshing and delightful.

The Customs are well handled on the

whole, though it was surprising to find a black man in a position of authority and wearing an official cap. I smiled at him deliberately, to show that there was no feeling at all about that kind of thing where I came from, and told him very politely that I had nothing of any value in my luggage—unless some notes for a talk on education in England could be so described. He simply pointed to one of my bags and said "That one!"

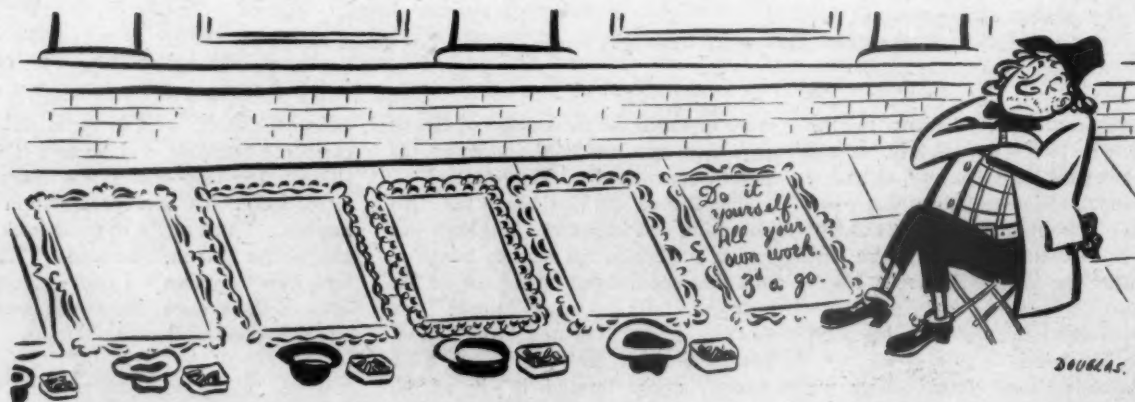
"I am an Englishman," I said, speaking slowly and distinctly. "Friend. Come only to give talk—pow-wow, savvy?—to all men, all colours. Nothing in here for trade. All clear, yes?"

"Open it up," he said.

Rather than get into an altercation with so surly a creature I opened the bag without another word. But one does see that America has problems which people back at home, with no knowledge of conditions on the spot, are all too ready to dismiss with a glib phrase. A short time out here would do them a world of good.

It was a disappointing start, after the fog and so on. As a matter of fact, the very first words addressed to me as I stepped off the gangway on to American soil were "Put that pipe out, you!" Land of the free, eh?

Next week: Impressions of America



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Reg'd at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper. Entered as 2nd-class Mail Matter at the New York, N.Y., P.O., 1903. Postage of this issue: Gt. Britain and Eire 3d.; Canada 1d.\* Elsewhere Overseas 3d.† Mark Wrapper top left-hand corner \*\*"Canadian Magazine Post" †"Printed Papers—Reduced Rate."

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